

**Educational Management and Administration in St. Lucia: Policy,  
Practice and Challenges for Small Education Systems.**

**Benoit Charles**

**Thesis Submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of  
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**Institute of Education, University of London**



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**Abstract**

The administration of education in St. Lucia has recently come under increasing scrutiny and criticism in the attempt to improve the quality of education as increasing demand for secondary education, and selection, which pervades the education system have increased pressures for improved student performance. Policymakers and practitioners believe that improved management of the education system is the key to improving performance. Consequently, there has been a raft of policies aimed at improving the management of the education system.

The central argument of this dissertation is that poor policy analysis, inappropriate strategies such as decentralisation, outdated management practices and inappropriate training of educational administrators, combined with the impact of scale, isolation and dependence, adversely affect the ability to meet the challenges of effective and efficient management of the education system. It charts the development of education from Pre-Emancipation to contemporary times. It critically examines the factors that influence educational policy and practice and examines contemporary educational policies to assess their ability to meet the challenges of a modern education system

The study is based in part, on original fieldwork data collected in St. Lucia. The approach

is essentially narrative, and uses both qualitative and quantitative data, gathered from a questionnaire survey and interviews with senior education officials.

The findings confirm that the operation of policy and practice is problematic, and unlikely to achieve improvements in the performance of the education system without major reforms. The analysis contributes to improved understanding of the complexities of educational administration in a small state, and shows the need for significant changes in the organisation of the education system and in policy analysis, especially policy implementation.

An organisational and policy framework is proposed, to respond to the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia.

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I am delighted that it is now all over, but it would not have been accomplished without the unstinting support and indulgence from my wife and daughter.

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To my daughter Simone, who at the tender age of 5 years kept asking me when I would stop ‘working’ all night. I hope she understands some day.



## DEDICATION

This study is especially dedicated to

My beloved wife, Faith;

and

Darling daughter Simone

Also to

All those who seek to promote lifelong learning

## CHAPTER 1

### Overview of the Study

#### 1.1 Introduction

This study was undertaken during a period of major educational reform in St. Lucia and growing influence of the grouping of Caribbean countries called the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States<sup>1</sup> (OECS). The OECS had recently agreed an Education Reform Strategy (ERS) in 1993, and St. Lucia was implementing a Basic Education Reform Project as part of that strategy. It was also a time of emerging local concern about the quality of education and recognition of the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system. It was also a time of increasing economic globalisation, which was blurring national boundaries and undermining the ability of countries to take independent action<sup>2</sup>.

St. Lucia, like other Commonwealth Caribbean countries, inherited from the colonial era an education system based largely on the British system of education. It could be argued, however, that there was never a single system of education in the former British colonies but rather, several systems with common organisational and structural elements. Although St. Lucia has been an independent country since 1979, the ties with Britain

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<sup>1</sup>1. The member states are: Antigua & Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Dominica, St. Kitts Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada.

remain very strong, especially in the field of education. Many of those links reflect a high degree of continuing reliance on Britain for financial and technical assistance for education projects.

People in St. Lucia, as in other parts of the Caribbean, hold education in the highest regard. It would not be an overstatement to suggest that education is seen as a panacea for underdevelopment and poverty.

Until recently, reforms in Caribbean education focused on the expansion of educational provision, especially in basic education. As primary enrolments rose towards universal coverage, increased attention was given to the expansion of secondary and tertiary education. However, since the early 1980s a combination of factors, including fiscal constraints, poor examination results and pressures from donor agencies have caused the government to focus on the quality of education and the management of the education system in particular.

The potential impact of management on the quality of education and school performance in particular is being increasingly acknowledged, and great emphasis is being placed on the management of the education system, particularly at the level of the school. There is a particular recognition of the role of principals, their potential impact on school performance and the contribution that staff trained in management and administration can make towards improving the performance of schools.

The need to improve efficiency, effectiveness and provide value for money, especially at a time when governments are under increasing fiscal constraints, is emerging as an urgent priority.

## **1.2 Developing Interest in the Research Problem**

This study was first conceived as a comparative study of educational management in the Caribbean and Britain. The Caribbean, because the author is from the Caribbean (*St.*

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<sup>2</sup> The range of issues raised here is discussed in later chapters.

*Lucia*) where he trained as a teacher and taught for many years. Britain, because at the time the study was conceived, he was a middle manager at a college of further education in London. It was also a time of increasing attention to management training for college managers in Britain, to equip them to manage the newly incorporated colleges of further education, which had previously been under the control of Local Education Authorities.

At a very early stage in the literature search, it became clear that the issue of scale and dependency were major strategic issues affecting educational development in the Caribbean. It was felt therefore, that a study on the management of education in small states that made recommendations for improving the performance on the education system would be far more valuable as a major contribution to educational development in St. Lucia.

### **1.3 Introducing the Research Problem**

Despite continuing attempts at reform, educational development in St. Lucia still faces many difficult problems and challenges. They include: insufficient numbers of qualified and trained teachers, inadequate secondary school provision, a curriculum not geared to meeting the perceived needs of the region, poor student attainment in schools, a lack of systematic measurement and evaluation of performance, deficiencies in the professional training and development of educational administrators, especially principals and centralised decision making by a few officials. There is still heavy reliance on assistance from aid agencies and foreign governments for resourcing development projects in education.

Students are underachieving at all levels in the education system. In 1984, in a reformed Common Entrance Examination for 10-year-olds, over 700 of the 3,500 entrants scored zero on the English paper, the results in Mathematics were reported to be even worse. In 1993, only 11 per cent of entrants achieved passes in 5 CXC (GCSE grades A-C equivalent). As a percentage of the age cohort, this would be considerably lower, given that only 33% of the age cohort attended secondary school in 1984.

The control of education in St. Lucia is a matter of concern to educational policy makers, practitioners and the church. Most primary schools are denominational and operate under a system of dual state and church control. There is a lack of clarity of understanding and differentiation between the role of the church and that of the state in education. Consequently, a state of continuous tension persists, often erupting in conflict between church and state, causing confusion about accountability of schools. This dual control of education, which stems from the historical involvement of the church in education, remains unresolved.

A major strategy to improve the management of the education system since the early 1990s has been to train educational administrators, especially principals in educational management and administration. However, there are major deficiencies in the existing training strategy and programmes in terms of the broad approach, content, relevance and orientation. There is a further related issue regarding the scope and opportunities for those who have been trained in administration to apply the techniques and practices that they have learned. While this phenomenon is quite common in other countries, it is of greater significance in small states like St. Lucia with limited resources that cannot afford to be wasteful: there is constant pressure to maximise the benefits by making every cent count.

Effective School Principles<sup>3</sup> have been adopted as a policy initiative for improving the performance of schools, despite the shortcomings of that model. There are two main problems with this approach: culture and process. Culture in the sense that the research has been conducted largely in Europe, North America and Australia, and policies based on them are unlikely to be appropriate to St. Lucia, which has a very different educational environment and culture. Process, in the sense that the model provides no clear analysis of the process for embedding 'school effectiveness principles' in schools to improve pupil achievement. Very important too, is the issue of how school effectiveness is to be measured in a meaningful way to facilitate continuous improvement.

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<sup>3</sup> These are based on Schools Effectiveness Research (SER). Twelve features of effective schools were selected, to be embedded in schools. A detailed discussion of SER is provided in Chapter 6.

The shortage of trained teachers remains a problem and has been a feature of the education in St. Lucia for some considerable time. There are problems in attracting and retaining high quality staff to teaching, and teacher-training capacity is limited. Many stay in teaching only for a few years, do not bother becoming teacher-trained and leave teaching when something better turns up. Typically, it has meant teachers going overseas and continuing their studies. There is also a high outflow of trained teachers.

The lack of appropriately trained personnel is widespread and not just in education. It is somewhat paradoxical that, while the system produces the skilled people it needs, the limited capacity of the economy to absorb them causes many people to emigrate to North America and to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom in search of better opportunities.

The curriculum is generally regarded as not being sufficiently geared to meeting local human resource needs, despite several reforms intended to achieve greater relevance. The curriculum is largely academic with little vocational content, especially at the technician level, resulting in acute shortages of qualified technicians. There is preponderance for those undertaking higher education to study for degrees, and in the social sciences and business and management at the expense of science, technology and engineering.

The education system in St. Lucia displays a high degree of dependence. There is heavy reliance on foreign curricula and examinations, reliance on international organisations for financial and technical assistance for most education projects. Many staff are trained at foreign institutions and even where local staff training programmes exist, they are both financed and run by foreign agencies. The textbooks used in post primary education are largely imported, as is pedagogy. The dependence on foreign sources for assistance has resulted in the government following policies, which may not be even in their interest, but do so because donors insist on them as a pre-condition for receiving assistance.

While St. Lucia can claim to have achieved universal enrolment in primary education, approximately 33% of the age cohort attended secondary school in 1993, and had risen to 70 per cent in 1996. The remaining 30% of pupils of statutory school age who do not

currently attend secondary school, generally languish in "all age" schools and a few in "senior primary" schools from the age of 13 until they reach the school leaving age of 15.

There is an emerging literature, which suggests that smallness imposes certain constraints on educational development in small states like St. Lucia. This has been acknowledged largely at the regional level, where governments undertake joint initiatives and collaborative projects, in an attempt to remove the constraints imposed by smallness. Notable examples are University of West Indies (UWI), The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).

Many policy initiatives are being implemented to address the problems in education. Policies aimed at addressing the particular problems of educational management and administration include: the establishment of School Districts, the setting up of Boards of Management for Schools, adoption of Effective Schools Principles, the training of principals in management & administration, implementing a system of school performance review and a 'Basic Education Reform Project', which has the training of educational administrators in management and administration as a major component.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

The effective and efficient management of schools, use of resources, good governance, highly trained, qualified and motivated staff, have been identified as essential to improving the quality of education and student performance. Consequently, recent policy initiatives have concentrated on improving the management and administration of the education system at all levels. The government of St. Lucia has placed great store in these policy reforms to achieve its educational objectives and produce the outcomes that will ensure that the necessary skills are available to meet the broader challenges of development in the context of globalisation in the new millennium.

However, despite the continuing attempts at reform to improve the management and administration of the education system to improve pupil performance by making it more

efficient, effective and responsive to local needs, many problems and challenges persist. The question is, given that so much depends on the success of those initiatives, whether the current policies and prevailing management practices have the potential and capability to meet the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia successfully. There are two other very important dimensions to the problem: the implications of smallness and dependence: financial, psychological and cultural. There is evidence to suggest that smallness imposes certain constraints on educational development and that some policies being adopted, largely borrowed from the West and designed for large developed countries, may not be appropriate for small states. Dependence on external sources for financial and technical expertise for education projects is also thought to undermine the ability of the government in a small state to take autonomous action and pursue policies of its choice. The further question is, given the perceived significance of scale and dependence for educational management and administration, whether current policies and practice reflect the implications of smallness and embrace strategies to reduce and counter the effects of educational dependence?

## **1.5 The Study Objectives**

Against the above background this study sets out to:

1. Identify the forces that have and continue to influence and shape educational policy and practice in St. Lucia.
2. Examine the implications of smallness and dependency for educational management and administration in St. Lucia
3. Analyse the education system in St. Lucia focusing on its organisation, structure, management, policy formulation and implementation, performance, school management & governance and the training of educational administrators.
4. Examine decentralisation as a major strategy in educational administration in St. Lucia, assess its appropriateness and analyse the implications for small states.



5. Develop a framework for formulating responses to the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia.

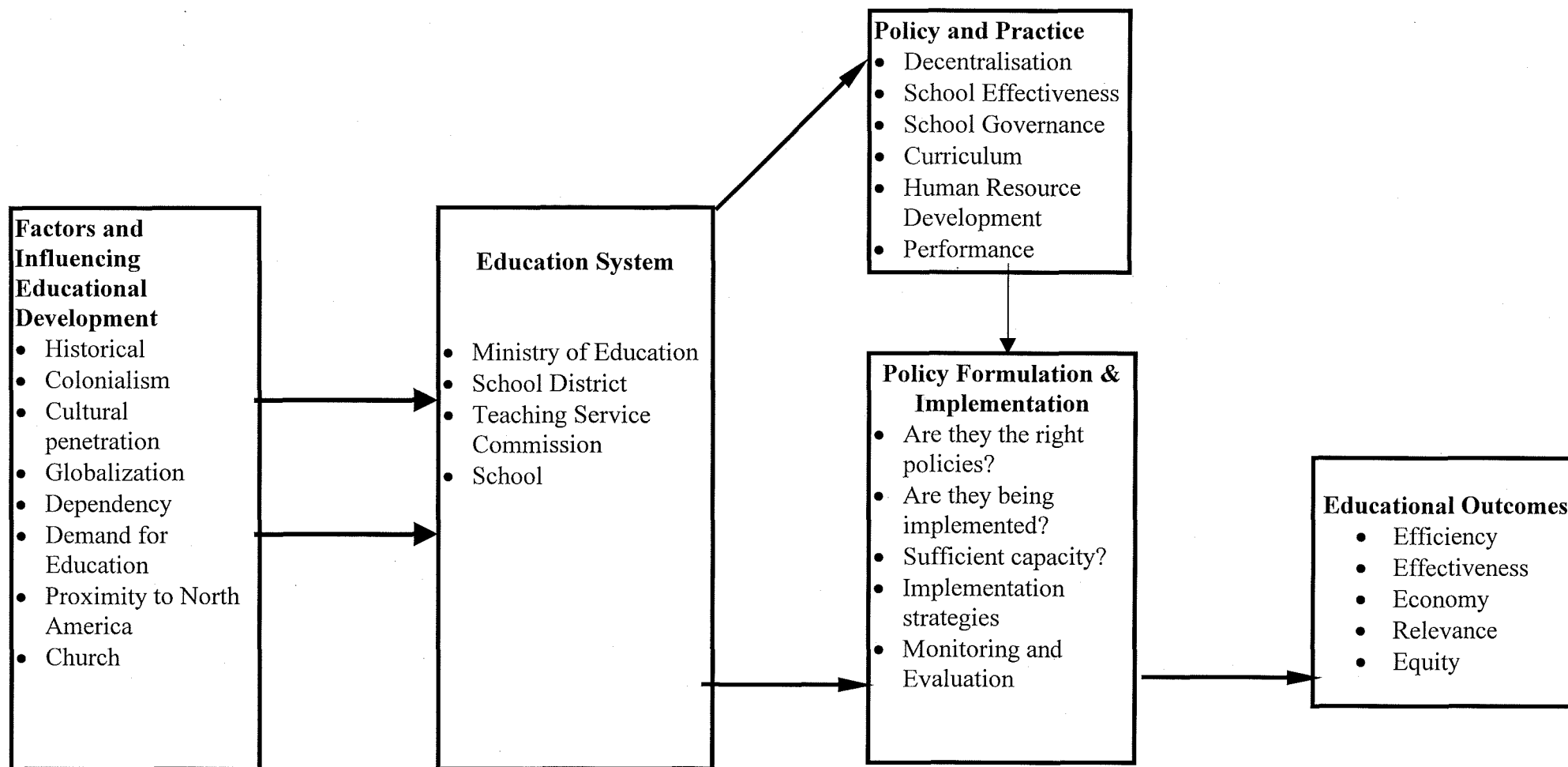
## **1.6 The Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for conducting the study is shown in Figure 1 on page 22.

The study considers how the various factors and forces have shaped the current education system in St. Lucia, and assesses the potential of policy and practice to meet predetermined educational objectives in the context of a small post-colonial state.

The study starts with an examination of the forces that have influenced and shaped education in Commonwealth Caribbean and St. Lucia in particular, to provide context and background to the study. This takes the form of an examination of the history, which is intertwined with the development of education in the region. Colonialism is linked to the history and is still a dominant force that continues to influence developments in education. The contributions by the Mico Charity, the Church and the Negro Education Grant were all significant forces in shaping education in the region.

Developments such as globalisation of economic activity, the explosion of information and communications technology, cultural penetration, the proximity of St. Lucia to industrialised economies of North America and the demand for labour in the UK after the Second World War, have all played important roles in shaping the education system. Local pressures on the education system have been intensifying in the face of increasing demand for secondary and tertiary education and qualifications that are recognised internationally.



**Fig.1 Conceptual Framework for the Study of Educational Management & Administration in St. Lucia**

The role of the Catholic Church in education is assessed. While its involvement has been very important historically, it continues to exert control over primary education, which is a source of much conflict between church and state.

The current education system is a product of the various forces that have shaped it, of which the Ministry of Education is the key player. How the Ministry is organised, structured, policymaking and implementation are vital determinants of a successful education system. Equally important however, is the operation of the school system and individual schools. The school is arguably the most critical component of the education system, because that is where pupil learning and teaching take place, and it is the output of the school that is used as a measure of the performance of the whole education system.

While the school is a significant unit, policy and practices are vitally important for setting the framework within which teaching and learning take place. The performance of the system including staff and students depends largely, on the policy framework and educational practices stipulated at ministerial level.

Other components of the education system, especially the School District and Teaching Service Commission play important roles in its functioning. The role of the Teaching Service Commission in staffing appointments and deployment is of particular significance in ensuring the availability of appropriately trained and qualified teaching staff.

The success of the education system depends of course, on the extent to which educational objectives are achieved and how they are measured. How educational outcomes are measured as to efficiency and effectiveness are critically assessed later in Chapter 6.

## 1.7 Theoretical Frameworks

This section introduces the theoretical frameworks, and the main theories and concepts are examined in the next chapter, which critiques the literature.

Theoretically, the study draws on different perspectives and disciplines. Education is considered a necessary, but not necessarily a sufficient condition for development. Consequently, the links between education and development are explored, drawing on several strands of development theory, especially human capital theory.

Human capital theory attributed the rise in income and economic growth to increase in investment in human capital. Therefore, investment in education and training was seen as the major determinant of development. Schultz has been credited with seminal work on human capital theory. In 1980, he reflected that:

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*of human-capital skills and knowledge. (Schultz, 1980:2)*

While this proposition may be dated, it is still influential and continues to be reflected in development policy in many developing countries including St. Lucia. The validity of this proposition can be seen from the increasing importance of human resource development, exemplified by the increasing growth in influence and importance of the 'knowledge' occupations. The continuing influence of human capital theory is due in part, to the "impasse" in development theory and its failure to fulfil the development aspirations of developing countries. (Schuuman, 1993; Leys, 1996)

The analysis of educational development in St. Lucia is also conducted within the framework of the dependency theory developed in Latin America through the works of Prebisch (1950), Frank (1967), Furtado (1976) and Cardoso & Faletto (1979)<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Dependency Theory is examined in full in Chapter Three, which critiques the literature.

Dependency theory sought to explain the state of persistent underdevelopment in Latin America, in rejection of the modernisation theories, which dominated thinking on development then. Dependency theory attributed the underdevelopment in Latin America to the dependent structural economic relationship between the economies of Latin America and the metropolitan powers. The main thesis is that the relationship led to persistent underdevelopment in the dependent countries.

Although dependency theory was developed for economic analysis it has influenced writing on educational dependency about the whole of the education system to include: structures, content, pedagogy, objectives, staff training and financing of educational developments. Sander (1985) sees evidence of dependence in educational administration in Latin America:

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*cultural dependence. (Sander, 1985:201).*

Dependency as a theory of underdevelopment came under severe criticism, resulting in the loss of influence, and probably has few fervent supporters today. The major criticism has been its apparent failure to adequately explain patterns of development and provide appropriate policy prescriptions. The application of dependency theory to education, like the economic dependency from which it stems, has also been criticised. For example, McLean (1983) maintained that:

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*1983:26)*

However, some of the perspectives of dependency remain valid, and if used as an analytical tool, can provide a very useful framework to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon of educational dependence, and its impact on education in ex-colonial small states like St. Lucia.

As Leys (1996) observed:

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*situations of dependency) remains valid. (Leys, 1996:31)*

This observation reflects the current situation in St. Lucia and much of the analysis will focus on dependency as an analytical tool.

Educational development is also considered from the perspective of colonialism, focusing on the educational legacy of colonialism. This is particularly relevant to this study, given that St. Lucia became independent from Britain only in 1979.

Brock (1982) suggested that:

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*culture and initiative. (Brock, 1982:119).*

Beckford (1972), the celebrated Caribbean scholar remarked that

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*mind of the people'. (Cited in Brock, 1982:119).*

Moreover, neo-colonialism has developed in the post-independence period. Although the countries are independent, their economy is being driven from outside.

Educational developments in small states are analysed within the context of scale, isolation and dependence as the major defining characteristics of small states. (Brock, 1984; Bray, 1984; Lillis 1993). Given that the study focuses on a small island state, the issue of "islandness", a geographical characteristic of Caribbean states and any implications for educational development are also considered.

Educational policy is examined within the context of development administration, which has become well established as a field of study. The following definitions of the discipline, explain the usefulness of the framework:

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1986:74).

Schaffer's definition is particularly relevant:

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*capacities and severe obstacles in meeting them. (Cited in Luke, 1986:75).*

This definition seems an accurate description of the educational challenges in small states.

Two themes of development administration are particularly useful for the analysis in this study: (1) building effective administrative capacity and (2) responsiveness and accountability: both help provide a framework for examining the administrative policies and practices in St. Lucia.

The analysis of educational management and administration, while drawing on the limited available literature with small state perspectives, makes extensive use of the literature emanating from small states and the perceptions of policy makers and practitioners in small states. This is deliberate, and an attempt to acknowledge and promote the contributions from indigenous practitioners and policy makers in small states.

Different management traditions provide the theoretical basis for studying educational administration in small states. Management as a branch of organisational theory, very

much underpins the discussions and perceptions of management at school level. Organisational analysis of educational institutions is often conducted within the Weberian bureaucratic framework. Management at institutional level is conducted within the framework of management theories, focusing particularly on organisational theory, and using ideas and tools such as leadership, motivation, empowerment and managerial competence.

## **1.8 The Geopolitical Framework**

The study refers to several geopolitical groupings in the Caribbean and the main ones are explained to provide clarity of understanding.

### *Association of Caribbean States (ACS)*

This is a grouping of islands from all the different language traditions in the Caribbean. It consists of Dutch, English, French and Spanish speaking countries. It is a forum for discussing issues of the wider regional interest.

### *CARICOM (Caribbean Community)*

This is the Common market of the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean. It was formed in 1979 to facilitate greater and free trade between its members and serves as a major international trade negotiating body.

### *Commonwealth Caribbean*

The term Commonwealth Caribbean is used to refer to all former and remaining British Colonies in the Caribbean that are members of the Commonwealth. These countries also share a common history, culture and language. There are no statutory links at this level but the common bond is the sharing of a common colonial history. The term is used in this study interchangeably with Caribbean.

### *Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*

This is a sub-regional grouping of CARICOM comprising eight Eastern Caribbean States (Antigua & Barbuda, St. Kitts-Nevis, Montserrat, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, St.



Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada) formed in 1981. It was established as a mechanism for enhancing co-operation among its member states.

The OECS is not a political or legislative body. Each member state retains its full sovereignty and OECS decisions have no legislative force.

## **1.9 The Thesis Structure**

This study on educational management and administration in small states examines educational practices from colonial to contemporary times, to assess the extent to which contemporary policy and practice, have the potential to meet the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia. This introductory chapter has provided an overview of the study.

The research methodology employed in the study is presented in Chapter Two. The chapter provides the rationale and justification for the eclectic approach adopted, which combines quantitative with a highly qualitative research. The research design is explained, sources of data identified, and data collection, organisation and analysis explained.

Chapter Three provides a critical review of the literature on development in small states. It begins with an account of the development of small states. The characteristics of small states are examined focusing on the issues of scale, isolation and dependence. The constraints and opportunities presented by smallness are considered, followed by an examination of conceptual problems surrounding the meaning of smallness. Educational dependence and its impact on policymaking are then critically examined.

The final section examines the literature on educational management and administration in small states.

It is shown that the initial interest in small states was in relation to their economic viability as independent states, especially in the light of calls from colonies for

independence. It is further noted that, while the concept of educational dependency is now widely used, suggesting acceptability of the broad framework at least, it is argued that there is not a clear distinction between the development features and characteristics are that are a consequence of size and those that are a consequence of other factors.

It is argued that interest in education in small states has focused too much on the characteristics, constraints and problems resulting from smallness. It is contended that, while smallness imposes certain constraints, it also presents great challenges and opportunities that must be explored to provide useful insights and concrete suggestions for tackling the developmental issues. The study argues for greater contribution by practitioners in small states to provide a local and different perspective to the burgeoning literature in the field.

Chapter Four sets the small states' context with reference to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and examines the major development issues and their implications for educational management and administration.

The world of small states is introduced, followed by a critical examination of how the issues of scale, isolation, dependence and globalisation impinge on educational development in the OECS. The concepts of efficiency and effectiveness are examined, as they pertain to education, followed by a consideration of the development imperatives for the OECS.

It is argued that the diversities among small states have not received sufficient coverage, and that research is lacking on the usefulness of existing grouping to develop a useful analytic framework for understanding the development process. It is contended that the features presented as characteristics and unique to small states are often present in large states.

Chapter Five provides an historical account of the development of mass education in the Caribbean. It starts with an historical account of mass education from pre-emancipation

to contemporary times.

It is shown that there was no educational provision to speak of before Emancipation and that even after Emancipation, educational development was haphazard, inadequate and of poor quality. It is also shown that the educational provision for the masses in the colonial period was aimed solely at producing people with the clerical skills required to support the colonial administration. It is also argued that the system of education that subsequently developed was an attempt to reflect educational development in Britain.

Chapter 6 examines the education system in St. Lucia and the major factors that influence policy and practice. The chapter starts with an overview of St. Lucia to set the context. The education system is then critically assessed focusing on the school system, teacher education, educational expenditure, performance measurement and management at school level.

The factors that have and continue to influence and shape policy are examined focusing the colonial inheritance, transferability of educational models, international assistance and dependence, regional developments, globalisation and school effectiveness research. This is followed by a critique of school effectiveness research, as a major influence on educational policy in St. Lucia. The challenges facing educational management and administration are considered, followed by an overview of recent policy reforms.

It is argued that the segmented nature of the education system, in which selection is divisive and inequitable, does not provide equal access to educational opportunity. An argument is made for a shift in the allocation of resources in favour of primary school in order to help improve the quality of basic education. The examination of the way in which the performance of the system is measured shows that there is no systematic method of doing so, and that performance indicators such as efficiency and effectiveness are little understood or used in any practical way.

It is argued that such factors as the colonial ties, reliance on the West for educational materials and research, technical and financial resources and globalisation, combined with limited domestic capacity are major influences on domestic policy and practice.

Chapter 7 examines decentralisation in small states. The chapter begins with an international perspective on decentralisation, and examines the experiences of countries that have decentralised their education systems. The factors influencing decentralisation in small states are identified and applied to St. Lucia to determine its appropriateness and implications for small states. The final part assesses the attempts at decentralisation by establishing Regional Authorities and School Districts in St. Lucia.

It is shown that small compact states with well-developed infrastructure and communications have fewer pressures for and are less likely to decentralise, concluding that conditions in small states do not favour decentralisation.

Evidence is provided to show that conditions in St. Lucia do not favour decentralisation of the educational system. It is argued that, while the decentralisation policies being followed in St. Lucia may be well intentioned with commendable objectives, they have inherent weaknesses, which are exacerbated by poor implementation strategies.

Chapter 8 is the critical examination of educational policy and practice in St. Lucia to assess their potential to meet the challenges of educational management and administration. It is based largely on field research carried out in St. Lucia.

The chapter starts by setting the context within which educational policymaking takes place, followed by the analysis of data from the field research: a survey questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

The final chapter draws together the main conclusions from the study and proposes a framework for policy makers to consider in responding to the challenges of educational management and administration.

A structural and policy framework is proposed to respond to the challenges in managing the education system. It includes changes to the organisational structure of the education system, a policy analysis framework and policy directions for the future.

### **1.10 Limitations of the Study**

While the study focuses on administration and management of the education system in St. Lucia, it does not examine the administrative and management competence of individual administrators. The focus on the organisation, structure and management of the system, policy, administrative practices at the different tiers of education the education. Emphasis is placed on management functions and processes such as decision-making, authority, responsibility, accountability, leadership, review and evaluation and strategic planning. However, the extent to which administrators are trained in management and administration is taken as a rough guide to managerial competence and an indicator of training needs.

The study does not adopt an objective-oriented approach to policy evaluation in that it does not focus on completed programmes or policy initiatives and the extent to which specific, pre-determined objectives have been achieved. This is largely due to the lack of clearly stated objectives of policy initiatives and the unavailability of adequate data. Instead, the focus is on policy orientation, in an attempt to contribute information for improved decision-making in educational management and administration.

During the field research in St. Lucia, it was often difficult and sometimes impossible to obtain published information, especially evidence of policy initiatives and results of evaluation exercises, mainly because there were no published evaluations. Often, there was almost total reliance on personal accounts, some of which may have been distorted, faintly recollected or coloured by individual interpretations. It is also possible that interviewees will have given a much more favourable impression of their own involvement than was really the case. It was very difficult and sometimes impossible to find corroborating evidence in these instances.

Where information was incomplete or unavailable, some reconstruction was undertaken. However, this is not thought to affect the validity of the study since these were more matters of detail than substance.

The study does not take into account any developments beyond the middle of 1998. This was because of the practical necessity, in terms of time and finance, to have a cut-off point to allow sufficient time for any new data to be collected and analysed. However, reference is made to developments after mid-1998 that are of particular relevance to this study.

### **1.11 Significance of the Study**

There is little existing literature on educational management and administration in small states and this study adds to the literature in this increasingly important area.

The study gives prominence to the experiences and perceptions of educational policy makers and practitioners in small states. In that context, the views at local level provide much needed balance and thus make an original contribution to knowledge in the field.

The analysis of the operation of the education system and the management of schools in particular from the perspectives of decision makers, practitioners and other influencers, is a significant contribution to the literature. This is also the first detailed study of the way in which the education system in St. Lucia is managed and the very first detailed study to examine management at the level of the school from the perspective of practitioners and principals in particular and suggesting ways in which current educational concerns might be addressed.

The study provides an in depth understanding and unique perspective of educational management & administration from the perspective of practitioners from small states. The critical assessment of the scope, desirability and appropriateness of decentralisation in small states makes a further original contribution to the literature in the field.

A unique contribution to literature in the field is provided by critically examining policies and practices to assess the extent to which they reflect the implications of smallness and respond to the causes and impact of educational dependency. This is an intractable problem for St. Lucia, which has been exacerbated by globalisation and power politics.

A structural and policy framework is provided for the education system to respond to the challenges of educational administration and management. The framework can serve as the basis for improving the capacity and ability of the education system to respond to present and future challenges.

*Man has long been concerned to come to grips with his environment and to understand the nature of the phenomena it presents to his senses. (Mouly, 1978).*

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Methodological Approach**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This Chapter explains the research methodology and approaches that underpin the study. The purpose of the study is restated and the appropriateness of the research methods considered in the light of the research objectives restated below.

#### **2.2 Purpose of the Study**

To reiterate, this study is a critical examination of policy and practice in educational management and their potential to improve the performance of the education system.

Recent educational reforms in St. Lucia have been concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system and policies have been aimed at bringing about much needed improvement. Policy reforms have been focusing on the role of educational administrators and the particular role of principals in improving the quality of education and pupil attainment. Despite these policies, major challenges in education persist. Not only has there been no attempt to systematically evaluate policies, but also there are concerns about the extent to which the policies address the impact of small scale and dependency.

The findings from this study will have implications, not only for education in St. Lucia, but also for other small states in the Caribbean and the OECS in particular.



## 2.3 Methodological Perspectives

Human beings have long been concerned to understand and come to terms with the environment and the nature of the phenomena it presents to the senses. Several approaches have been developed to help understand and interpret the environment.

The literature on research methods (Keeves, 1988; Cohen & Manion, 1989; Anderson, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994, Gubba & Lincoln, 1994) acknowledges the existence of several paradigms competing for acceptance of choice in educational enquiry. Guba and Lincoln (1994) identify at least four such paradigms: positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and related ideological positions and constructivism. Among the different approaches, two main or classical paradigms have emerged to compete for choice in educational enquiry. Each of these two main approaches reflects a particular view of social reality. One is a traditional approach, based on the natural sciences in which, studies are conducted according to a plan aimed at discovering laws governing behaviour. The other approach is more flexible and is adjusted according to what happens during the investigation. While this approach accepts that there may be general laws governing behaviour, it accepts that human behaviour differs from that of inanimate phenomena. This is sometimes called the naturalistic approach to research.

Cohen & Manion (1989) clarified the distinctions between these two approaches, describing the traditional approach as '*normative*' and the naturalistic approach as '*interpretative*' paradigms.

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*Manion, 1989:38).*

In conducting educational enquiry, researchers are therefore confronted with two main methodological approaches competing for their favours. Heusen (1988) drew attention to these competing paradigms.

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*information and other interpretative approaches (Heusen in Reeves, Ed, 1988:17).*

Eisner (1985) in his inimitable style distinguished between these approaches and expressed support for the interpretative approach to educational research.

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*sees with the kind of qualification that the situation warrants. (Eisner, 1985:2.)*

Writers are increasingly cautioning against confining the research methodology to one or the other approach and suggest the use of both approaches where appropriate. Depending on the objective of the research, emphasis will be placed more on one than the other. However, the choice of mix of paradigm will be determined by the type of knowledge that is being sought, bearing in mind that the ultimate purpose of research knowledge in education is to provide a basis for action.

Keeves (1988) also argues that the various research paradigms are complementary to each other and calls for a “unity of educational research”.

The nature of the research problem and the objective of the study can help to determine the methodology and techniques to be used. The choice of approach to this study was influenced by several factors. Whilst the project is aimed at extending the corpus of knowledge in the area under investigation, it was primarily concerned with providing understanding and prescriptions for future policy. Another factor was recognition that educational policy and practice are not independent of the socio-cultural contexts, which

needs to be examined to contextualise the development of educational policy and practice. However, the study draws more heavily on the interpretative paradigm, accepting the theoretical position that there is a fundamental difference between the study of natural objects and human beings in that, the latter interpret situations themselves and give meaning to it.

## 2.4 Qualitative Research in Education

The two principal paradigms examined above are generally associated with particular research methods and techniques. There is a tendency for the positivist approach to use quantitative research methods and the anti-positivist or interpretative paradigm approach to use qualitative research methods, but the association of research paradigms with techniques is not mutually exclusive as to research techniques.

As Miles & Huberman (1984) argue

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*community.* (Miles & Huberman, 1984:20)

Miles & Huberman (1994) also concluded "good qualitative research requires an interactive mix of the two views of life"

Qualitative research techniques also underpin 'grounded theory' (Glasser & Strauss, 1967), which is derived from the analysis of data systematically obtained from social research. According to Glasser & Strauss (1967)

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*generation of theory.* (Glasser & Strauss, 1967; 17-18).

There has been a growing interest in the use of qualitative methods in educational research, product of epistemological critiques of the positivist tradition. In educational research, the interpretative paradigm usually combines an interpretative theoretical framework with the use of qualitative techniques. The distinctive features of qualitative research concern matters of both research techniques and epistemology. In terms of technique, qualitative research encompasses techniques that are not statistically based. They would include techniques such as participant observation, interviewing, case studies, documentary sources and surveys. The underlying logic of quantitative research is generally deductive, in that hypotheses are formulated and tested by empirical research. Qualitative research draws on different philosophical traditions and theoretical perspectives. The perspective sees events as being constructed by actors, rather than external forces, which mould the individual human beings. Another focus draws on phenomenology, involving the meanings that people attribute to their actions and the processes by which actions are given meaning in the course of human interaction. This methods looks, not so much for causes but meaning, rejecting the methods of the natural sciences and seeing the task of the educational researcher as uncovering meaning of events. The logical procedure tends to be inductive rather than deductive, in that data is used to develop, not just test generalisations.

The study accepts that whatever the methodology, research can be undertaken using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Consequently, the study reflects this mix and the approach could be described as eclectic. However, the method of enquiry is mainly descriptive and employs some of the key qualitative strategies described by Wolcott (1992) to include discussions, interviews and archival research. This is also consistent with the approach of researchers such as Lewin (1990), experienced in conducting research in developing countries:

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*(Lewin 1990:47).*

## **2. 5. A Policy-Oriented Research Perspective.**

This study can also be described as being policy-oriented, in that it attempts to gather evaluative data to contribute to improved decision-making and programme implementation.

The term policy-oriented research is generally used to refer to research that is designed with the specific purpose of informing policy decisions or assisting in their implementation. It is to distinguish it from fundamental research, which is primarily designed to extend knowledge. The function of such research is to provide a corpus of information for decision-making by politicians, administrators and policy-makers.

Policy-oriented research is seen as consisting of careful, systematic attempts to understand the educational process. Nisbet (1997) has provided a comprehensive definition, worth quoting at length.

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*better policy decisions in the future. (Nisbet, 1997,139).*

Majchrak (1984) defined policy research as:

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ndamental  
atic action  
(Cited in

*Anderson, 1990:186).*

Policy analysis is also closely linked with policy evaluation and according to Anderson (1990).

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*a new programme or activity. (Anderson, 1990:165)*

Policy-oriented research can also be construed in terms of ‘policy scholarship’ (Grace, 1988 & 1995). Grace uses the term policy scholarship as distinct from policy science. Policy science is described as a form of social and educational analysis, which attempts to extract a social phenomenon from its relational context in order to subject it to close analysis. Grace (1988) argues that this approach is devoid of historical or cultural dimensions of the subject under investigation. The main concern here is to understand present phenomena in order to formulate rational recommendations for action.

Grace (1995) argues that this perspective is limited, because it often excludes the relationship between social phenomena and the structure of historical, cultural, political and ideological and value issues in education since many problems in education are manifestations of these ideological, historical and cultural contradictions in society.

Policy scholarship on the other hand, implies a mode of analysis, which goes beyond policy science and takes into account historical, cultural contexts and value relations.

According to Grace (1995)

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*schooling. (Grace, 1995,3).*

The concept of ‘policy scholarship’ as described by Grace is particularly relevant to this study. In the context of the Caribbean and St. Lucia in particular, many of the educational problems are manifestations of structural, historical, cultural and ideological values. These problems cannot be appreciated and addressed satisfactorily, unless they are contextualised.

In terms of analysis, this study could also be said to have adopted a policy scholarship approach, as opposed to a policy science approach, given the significance of the socio-cultural and historical context in the development of education in St. Lucia.

The study intends to provide valuable information and make recommendations to policy makers to correct any deficiencies in the system and modify policies and practice where necessary. This is achieved through an assessment of policies and practices in educational management and administration, which serve as the basis for formulating appropriate recommendations. The use of policy evaluation in achieving these objectives seems most appropriate and justified.

The approach is used to critically examine educational policies, practices and their implementation in St. Lucia. The policies are examined through the study of policy documentation, reports produced by external consultants, focus group discussions and interviews with education officials. The evaluation was based largely on the discussions that took place with officials and the limited published information available on review and evaluation of policies. The assessment was based largely on information pieced together from various sources such as annual education reports, annual work plans, statistical reports and any other information on performance and output to enable a judgement to be formed about the effectiveness of actions taken. This was particularly so

with decentralisation, which had been operating for quite some time but for which there was no published review or evaluation.

## **2.6 Research Methods**

This section discusses the choices of research techniques used in this study. These include historical research, surveys and interviews.

### **2.6.1 Historical Research**

Historical research has been defined as a process of systematically searching for data to answer questions about past phenomena for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of present institutions, practices, trends (Gall et al, 1996). Historical research in education can be distinguished from other types of educational research in that, it aims to discover data through the search of historical sources such as documents and relics, whereas, other types of educational research tend to create data, by making observations and carrying out tests to describe events and present performance.

Epistemologically, historical research tends to be interpretative as opposed to positivist in that, it acknowledges bias and the fallibility in human judgement. However, it is thought that careful analysis and multiple data sources such as triangulation can discover the historical truth. Historical research methods can also be said to contain an element of revisionism, insofar as it attempts to reinterpret events surrounding particular developments in education. Interpretation is quite an important process because history necessarily deals with events that have occurred, so there is reliance on records made by others, which may reflect biases, value judgements and omissions.

In terms of research methodology, there are similarities between historical methods and other qualitative research methodologies. Edson (1986) identified four such similarities:

1. emphasis on the study of context
2. the study of behaviour in a natural rather than contrived or theoretical setting
3. appreciation of the wholeness of the experience, and
4. the centrality of interpretation in the research process.



Historical research can be of great value. As Cohen & Manion (1989) argued

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*educational practices and theories developed. (Cohen & Manion, 1989:49).*

The product of this type of research can be of particular benefits to educationalists, policymakers and the community at large. It can also provide insight into problems and provide better understanding of educational institutions, educational ideas, movements and whole education systems.

Historical research must also be considered against the uncertain nature of historical generalisations, which has led to increasing criticisms of the traditional assumptions and methodology. Kaestle (1997) advised that:

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*historians. (Kaestle, 1997: 76)*

The assumptions underpinning the traditional framework for historical research has come under increasing attack. Its two key assumptions: first that the history of education was based on, and was concerned centrally and indeed, exclusively with the history of school systems and; and second, that state-regulated, tax supported universal schooling was a good thing. The first critique broadened the focus of educational history to consider various agencies of learning, other than schools, bringing learning as a wider process of socialisation. The other critique questions the assumption that state-regulated schooling has been motivated by democratic humanitarian impulses and that it has led to democratic opportunity. The critique emphasises the culturally abusive nature of values asserted by the schools and the exploitative nature of capitalism.

However, historical methods are not without their methodological problems, as Kaeste (1997) explains

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*art. (Kaeste, 1997:75).*

There are further problems in conducting historical research in that; historical events are not subject to direct observation by the researchers. There is total reliance on the observations and interpretations by others, which can reflect biases, socio-cultural values biases, which can be compounded by inadequate information. However, such a situation provides an opportunity for the reinterpretation of historical events. This is the situation in St. Lucia where, the developments of education and administrative practices are not well documented and available information is incomplete or non-existent. Information about the administrative structures of early Caribbean education was often inadequate or missing and some reconstruction was done.

While the historical research of educational development in St. Lucia has been based on the traditional assumptions, this study recognises the value and contribution of non-school agencies to learning. It also recognises the increasing bureaucratic nature of educational management and administration, and asks questions about the motivation behind the proliferation of such bureaucracy. While the research acknowledges that there can be alternative arrangements and different motivations for providing education, state education in St. Lucia is seen as having a central and critical role to play in the island's development.

The study is also concerned with the evaluation of the development of education in the Caribbean in order to draw conclusions, which can serve as a basis for current and future policy. The use of historical research provides an insight into the development of education in the region in an attempt to develop an understanding and appreciation of the current state of education in St. Lucia.

The historical study of the development of education in the Caribbean is intended to bring greater understanding to serve as a basis for progress. This can have great value, which has been categorised by Hill & Kerber (1967) as follows:

1. *It enables solutions to contemporary problems to be sought in the past*
2. *It throws light on present and future trends*
3. *It stresses the relative importance and the effects of the various interactions that are to be found within all cultures and*
4. *It allows for the revaluation of data in relation to selected hypotheses, theories and generalisations held about the past. (Cited in Manion & Cohen, 1995: 48)*

Historical research methods are used in the study to investigate the first and second research questions. This method has been used to identify the forces that have and continue to influence and shape educational policy and practice in St. Lucia and the Caribbean in general. Moreover, as a research method, it is used to examine the development of mass education in the Caribbean and St. Lucia in particular, to help greater understanding and appreciation of the links between history and current educational developments.

### **2.6.2 Survey**

Surveys are a widely used research technique, and this study uses two of its principal methods: postal questionnaire and interview. These two forms were seen as most appropriate given the focus of the study, which is to find out the perceptions of educational practitioners and policy makers of educational development in St. Lucia. This also involved some triangulation in the attempt to obtain perceptions of the three key players in education (church, Ministry officials and principals) of the issues under investigation.

The use of the questionnaire in gathering information is quite widespread. It has a particular strength in allowing information to be collected on a wide range of variables. It can include factual questions about the respondents such as age, sex, occupation, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, planned activities and education. The postal questionnaire offers a particular advantage in that, it is less costly and time consuming compared to

alternative methods of gathering information such as interviewing and participant observation. There are also weaknesses in using this technique, not least, because of its underlying assumptions: the respondent can read and understands the questions or items, they possess the information to answer the questions or items and they are willing to answer the questions or items honestly.

The validity and reliability of conclusions drawn from a study could be seriously compromised, if the assumptions do not hold. There is a further assumption in the use of postal questionnaires in that it assumes first that there is a reliable postal service and that sufficient numbers of respondents will return completed questionnaires to give a representative sample. This is a very important consideration when conducting research in developing countries as will be shown later.

In conducting this study, which was self-financed and involved two periods of fieldwork in St. Lucia, the postal questionnaire presented the only affordable means of undertaking this enquiry. This method provided clear advantages in terms of the cost of processing data, the cost of data collection, and the ability to reach respondents who are widely dispersed. However, there are disadvantages in that the response rate could be quite low and unsuitable for respondents with poor literacy. It also provides little or no opportunity to probe or check on incomplete responses. The interview as a research method was used to collect data for the study to supplement and complement the data obtained from the questionnaire. The great advantage of the interview is that it provides the scope for greater depth and breadth afforded by other methods. The use of the interview is particularly useful to gather information of direct relevance to the subject under investigation. As Tuckman (1972) put it:

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*research undertaking. (Cited in Cohen & Manion, 1989:309).*

In this study, the interview was used for exactly that purpose: to specifically go into the deeper motivation of respondents and the reasons for their particular responses.

## **2. 7 Procedures**

The field research consisted of two stages. The first stage involved a postal questionnaire, (Appendix 1) which was sent to all primary and secondary school principals in St. Lucia in mid-February 1994, followed by interviews with education officials. The questionnaire served two main purposes: (1) to obtain principals' perceptions of educational administration and management of schools (2) to identify interesting areas of educational administration and management for further research.

The questionnaires were posted to a contact at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour in St. Lucia, who sent them out to principals. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter and a stamped addressed envelope in which to return the completed questionnaire at an address in St. Lucia. Recipients were allowed four weeks to return the questionnaire. The return date for the questionnaire was timed to coincide with the period of fieldwork in St. Lucia; to enable some issues arising from the questionnaires to be followed up in the semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was followed by three weeks of field research in St. Lucia during which, senior education officials including principals were interviewed and archival research conducted.

The results of the questionnaire were analysed in terms of frequency distribution with cross tabulation using SPSS. (*Statistical Package for Social Sciences*).

The second stage of the field research took place two years later in July 1996, and investigated more fully the key issues emerging from the first stage and consisted of further interviews and focus group discussions. It consisted of detailed investigation of further areas of interest that emerged from the first state, especially those that had been identified as being of particular interest and pertinent to educational administration and management and to give the study a sharper focus. The investigations took the form of



focus group discussions and further interviews with education and other public sector officials.

### **2.7.1 Sources of Data**

Data were obtained from many sources, including documentary sources of both primary and secondary data, the results of the questionnaire sent to principals, recorded interviews and focus group discussions.

### **2.7.2 Sample**

The entire population of principals in St. Lucia was surveyed. Questionnaires were sent to all 102 primary and secondary school principals in St. Lucia. Eighty-five completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of approximately 83%. Ten principals (approximately 10% of the population) were interviewed. They were chosen by stratified sampling to ensure that characteristics such as size of school, location, type of school and gender, experience and age of principals were contained in the sample.

Of those responding, 51% were male and 49% female. A majority of respondents (63%) were aged between 35 and 49 years with 97% over 35 years. A further characteristic of the sample was that 79% had been principals for less than 17 years and with 38% having less than 5 years experience as principals. Over a quarter (28%) held a Bachelor's degree and 7% Master's degrees. The remainder held at least a Teachers' Certificate validated by the University of the West Indies.

There were difficulties in interviewing all principals in the original stratified sample. Three primary school principals in the original sample did not have telephones and could not be contacted to seek an interview, other than by visiting the school. These visits could not be undertaken because of the time and cost involved in travelling to the schools to make contact and an appointment, which may have necessitated a further visit to conduct the interview. The cost of the travel and time involved would have been prohibitive,

given that the study was self-financed. Further, the postal service was not reliable and quick enough, and neither was there sufficient time to have written to and await replies from principals during the field study. Consequently, three schools were replaced by first drawing up a list of the remaining primary schools with telephones, and going through the sampling process to select three that showed the desired characteristics, but this was not thought to affect the validity of the results.

### **2.7.3 Postal Questionnaire**

The questionnaire focused on educational management and administration in St. Lucia. It contained forty-four questions relating principally to the third and fourth research questions and some aspects of the sixth research question. They covered six broad areas.

- (a) The control of education,
- (b) Policy making
- (c) Performance measurement
- (d) School management
- (e) Professional development of principals
- (f) Decentralisation.

The questions were in the main closed, requiring respondents to tick their chosen answers. In recognition of the restrictive nature of closed questions, an "Other" answer was included where appropriate, to enable respondents to provide answers that were not given as options and to provide reasons for choices of particular answers. Participants were also asked to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in face-to-face interviews. All questions were pre-coded to facilitate computer analysis.

The postal questionnaire seemed to have had a 'Hawthorn Effect' in that some of the questions asked generated so much interest from principals that many of them tried to find out much more about the issues.

#### **2.7.4 Documentary Information**

Documentary evidence, especially for the historical section of the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The main sources of primary data were the Public Record Office in London, The Institute of Commonwealth Studies, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the St. Lucia Archives Department, UNESCO Office at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Labour and Broadcasting. Other important sources especially for secondary data included the Institute of Education Library, Commonwealth Institute and the OECS Secretariat Headquarters in St. Lucia.

The Public Records Office and The Commonwealth Institute were the major sources of primary data on the development of education in the Caribbean. The main primary sources were the documents that are generally considered to have had the greatest influence in the development of education in the Caribbean (*Housed at the Public Records Office in London*) and St. Lucia Annual Education Reports. (*Housed at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies*). Other documents researched included West Indian Colonial Reports (WICR), Annual Colonial Reports on the Territories and other correspondence and communication relating to early Caribbean history, especially before the 1960's. These sources were vital for researching the development of education in St. Lucia, because neither the history of education nor the development of administrative practices in education in St. Lucia is well documented.

The Commonwealth Secretariat in London was another very useful source of information, especially for primary data on education in small states. Much of the research and work on small states has been sponsored or undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The OECS Secretariat in St. Lucia was a very useful source for information on the educational initiatives in OECS, especially on contemporary policy. Copies of policy papers, reports and statistical digest and other relevant documentation were obtained from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour. These documentary sources together with the responses to the questionnaire and interviews provided most of the qualitative data for the study



### **2.7.5 Interviews**

The postal questionnaire to principals was followed by unstructured interviews with some principals and education officials.

The interview was selected as a research method to complement the postal questionnaire and enable issues to be explored in greater depth. It was used as a main tool to obtain information about the management issues at school level.

Consequently, the interviews with principals enabled some issues arising from their responses to the questionnaire to be followed-up and to obtain detailed information about school management.

All interviews with principals and some with Ministry of Education officials were tape-recorded. Each lasted for sixty-five minutes on average.

All interviews followed the same pattern. An aide memoire consisting of questions and issues to be raised was used to guide the interviews. All principals were asked the same questions, not necessarily in the same order. Issues were probed, clarification and elaboration sought, where these were felt necessary.

Similarly, the semi-structured interviews with education officials focused on issues relating to education planning and administration at the national and district levels.

The interviews with senior education officials followed the same pattern as principals, with a different set of questions being asked. All respondents were asked the same questions not necessarily in the same order. Questions were asked in the order that allowed them to flow most easily from one issue to another.

Some thought was given to whether to request permission to tape the interviews with the senior education officials but was decided against in the end. It was felt that some officials would not wish to go on the record while others might regard such requests

as impolite and refuse to co-operate altogether.

The issues covered in the interviews with officials included decentralisation, control and management of education, the impact of smallness, educational policymaking, performance appraisal and administrative reforms. The individual interviews concentrated on the issues relating to the officials' areas of responsibility. For example, the interviews with the Director of the OECS Education Reform Strategy focused on the nature of the reform package and the rationale behind it.

During the second period of field research, the interviews with government officials focused on decentralisation of public services in general and education in particular. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth and Community (with responsibility for decentralisation) at some considerable length, and further interviews were also conducted with education officers.

#### **2.7.6 Focus Group Discussions**

The second period of field research took place in July 1996. It consisted mainly of focus group discussions and some unstructured interviews. The focus discussion method was chosen because it seemed ideal for the type of information required at the particular stage in the research. The major advantage was that it introduced greater interviewer control in the kinds of questions used and sought to limit the discussion to certain parts of the respondents' experience. (Madge, 1965; Cohen & Manion 1989).

The situation lent itself to this type of interview given that, the subjects had all been involved in school management and had experienced the effects of educational administrative policies, the elements of the situation deemed important had already been identified through earlier research, which also served as a basis to determine what information was required and given that this was based on the subjective experiences of the participants, provided an opportunity to test any hypotheses that may have been formulated from the earlier research.

Focus group discussions were held with three groups of principals: one group of four secondary school principals and two groups of primary school principals: one with 20 and the other with 18 participants.

The discussions with secondary principals took place in the conference room at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Labour and Broadcasting and lasted for two hours. Eight secondary school principals had been invited to the discussions via the Ministry of Education, Culture, Labour and Broadcasting and four attended. The discussions with the primary principals and senior teachers took place at the Castries Comprehensive School where the principals were having their Summer INSET workshops. The discussion with each group lasted for approximately one hour.

The focus group discussions with both groups concentrated on the areas identified from previous research as critical to educational administration and to give the enquiry sharper focus. These included:

- the implications of smallness for educational development
- decentralisation, especially the establishment of School Districts and Boards of Management for schools
- school performance and appraisal
- training and professional development of principals
- school effectiveness movement
- management of schools, powers and responsibilities of principals.

These focus group discussions were invaluable in providing the practitioners' perspective on school management.

## **2.8 Data Analysis**

This study involved the analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was generated from the survey questionnaire and the qualitative data. The quantitative data was analysed in the terms of frequency distributions and cross-tabulations using SPSS in an attempt to discover relationships between key variables.

Bringing order, structure and meaning to masses of data can be a major challenge for researchers. One of the major tasks in this instance was data reduction. This required focusing on the key issues from the mass of information gathered during the fieldwork. This involved not only making decisions and judgements about what was important and instrumental to the study and what was not, but also organising the data in such a way to facilitate retrieval.

All tape-recorded interviews were played and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed information from each interview was studied and the key points organised into heading reflecting the key areas of investigation. The categories were reviewed constantly and refined as the study proceeded.

## **2.9 Ethical Considerations**

The nature of qualitative research and its method of data collection can give rise to a number of ethical issues that the researcher must consider. These issues concern matters of confidentiality and protection of those participating in the research; openness or covertness and the argument over ends and means.

According to Bulmer (1982)

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*confidential. (Bulmer, 1982:225)*

This is particularly important in qualitative research, because of the position of trust of the researcher. It is important that precaution is taken to protect information that may incriminate or embarrass individuals. This is particularly important, in policy research where the research may focus on people lower down the hierarchy or identifiable groups or sections to which it could be very damaging. This is particularly important where the information is fed back in the situation.

The main ethical issue that this study was concerned with confidentiality in relation to responses to the interviews and questionnaire, therefore, maintaining confidentiality in

this research was very important because, not only did the research deal with sensitive and controversial issues, but also very importantly, there was a need to ensure that the authorities did not have access to information that could be used to victimise participants.

Therefore, particular care was taken to ensure that no one, other than the researcher, could link responses to specific schools or principals. Consequently, the names of respondents have not appeared in the study. The few quotes or information have been attributed to specific individuals are either non-contentious or the individuals are in senior and powerful positions and will not be damaged by their publication.

The covering letter that accompanied the questionnaire explained the purpose of the questionnaire and the nature of the research being undertaken. Moreover, the questionnaire gave respondents assurances that their responses would be confidential and that information identifying them would not be disclosed under any circumstances. It was therefore, essential to adhere to these assurances, once they had been given.

*(Kevin Lillis, 1993).*

## CHAPTER 3

### Development of Small States: A Critical Review of the Literature

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the literature on development in small states with particular emphasis on educational development.

The chapter starts with an international perspective on the link between education and development and an overview of development theory to contextualise the discussions. A review of the literature on the development of interest in small states is next, followed by a review of the literature on economic and educational development. The challenges and constraints imposed by smallness, with emphasis on educational dependence, educational administration and decentralisation in small states are all critically examined.

The final section identifies the limitations and weaknesses of the literature, and explains how the study will address these.

#### 3.2 Education and Development

There has been a long association between education and economic growth, which can be traced back to the classical economists like Adam Smith who emphasised investment in human skills to promote economic growth. The thinking was that, as income grew, the benefits would ‘trickle down’ to the entire population. Education was seen as playing a crucial role in this process in providing the skills needed in the economy. This formed the basis of the human capital theory developed by Schultz (1961), who showed that

education contributed to economic growth. Other scholars such as Psacharopoulos & Woodall (1985) concluded that education was a major contributor to economic development. Although there may still be questions about the exact nature of the relationship between education and development, that education is a major factor in development is not in doubt. Morris (1996), in a survey of four South East Asian economies found that schooling had played a critical role in the accumulation of human capital.

It was generally assumed at that time that development was synonymous with economic growth as measured by Gross National Product (GNP) and 'trickle down' was expected to contribute significantly to this process by producing trained and skilled workers for industry. However, it soon became evident that the benefits were not necessarily 'trickling down' but rather, a dual economy was being created in which most of the benefits were accruing to the elite and middle classes who were already within the developed sector, and the majority of those in the 'undeveloped sector' remained unaffected. (Chenery, 1974).

The then President of the World Bank, Robert McNamara also noted this occurrence:

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*Board of Governors, Washington D.C. World Bank, 1977:22).*

The attempt to meet basic human needs gave rise to what was referred to as modernisation theory based on Rostow's (1971) 'stages of growth theory'. The main thesis was that developing countries must aspire to reach the stage of the developed countries by going through certain development stages until that state was achieved. The stages are traditional society, establishing the conditions for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass consumption.

Consequently, developing countries invested heavily in education and implemented policies based on these development theories and perspectives. The human capital

approach dominated development thinking until the 1960s, when its validity began to be questioned.

Human capital theory came under heavy criticisms, centred on its underlying assumptions. One assumption challenged was that the earnings of workers were an indication of their contribution to output and that the higher earnings of educated workers are a measure of increased productivity. In addition, that the relationship between input and output was a straightforward and capable of analysis by a simple production function also came under attack. These attacks undermined the theory and it lost credibility.

However, research carried out in the late 1980s still showed very strong correlation between economic growth and human resource development indicators such as literacy and numeracy. The failure of policies based on human capital growth theories to achieve development in Latin America brought about a search for the real cause of the state of persistent underdevelopment, which gave rise to dependency theory.

There now seems to be a renaissance of human capital theory as governments all over the world are proclaiming education as the key to global success. For example, during the 1997 British elections Tony Blair (Then Leader of the Opposition Labour Party declared:

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### 3.3 Dependency Theory

Dependency theory was introduced earlier in Chapter 1 in the section entitled *Theoretical Frameworks*. The section that follows dissects the literature on dependency and educational dependency, generally regarded as key features of small states.

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5 Extract of a Lecture by Tony Blair, Leader of the Labour Party at the Barber Institute of Fine Art,



To reiterate, dependency theory was developed in response to the failure of Latin America to achieve economic development, despite implementing industrial development policies based on modernisation theories, which was the dominant thinking on economic development then. It sought to explain the relative underdevelopment in Latin America by attributing the state of underdevelopment to the dependent structural economic relationship between the economies of Latin America and the metropolitan powers. Very importantly, the theory sought explanations for the conditions of dependence from the perspective of the dependent society. It was concerned with the causes and consequences of political and economic forces in which all the countries of the world participate. It identified the major players and their interest from both dominant and dependent society. The theory brought in new analytical categories and structures to describe and explain the relationship as dominant/dependent, metropolis/satellite and centre/periphery.

Dependency theory argues that the world's present state can be most validly seen as the outcome of domination by the 'have' countries over the 'have-nots', and within countries, by the domination of 'haves' over 'have nots' classes and interest. (Frank, 1967.) Dependency theory was also ground breaking in that, it was the first serious attempt to understand and explain socio-economic structures from the point of view of the dependent country. While the initial conception was for the countries of Latin America, the theory has been applied to developing countries generally in terms of the North-South and developed- developing countries divide.

The pioneering work in this field was by Latin American scholars such as Prebisch (1950), Cardoso & Faletto (1969). Dos Santos, (1973), Furtado (1976). Significant contributions were made by Western supporters of dependency such as Frank (1967) and Seers (1981) of which Frank is the best known. Dos Santos (1973) put the basic hypothesis of dependency theory thus:

*immediate development. (Dos Santos, 1973:76)*

Three main strands or approaches to dependency emerged from the literature. (1) dependency as a theory of capitalist underdevelopment (b) dependency as an obstacle to development and (c) as a concept and analytical framework for analysing concrete situations of dependency.

### **3.3.1 Dependency as a theory of underdevelopment**

Dependency as a theory of underdevelopment, is associated with the work of Frank (1967) who attempted to construct a 'theory of underdevelopment', based on the premise that underdevelopment in the peripheral countries is caused by the dependent nature of the economies themselves. This approach argued that the development of some economies as retarding or constraining the development of others, giving rise to what Frank (1967) referred to as the 'development of underdevelopment'. In this situation, the relationship between countries assumes the states of dependence and dominance in which development in the dependent countries is determined by development in the dominant country. In this situation, the dependent country benefits only marginally from this relationship.

### **3.3.2 Dependency as an Obstacle to Development**

This perspective maintained that underdevelopment in Latin America was due to Latin America's position at the periphery of the centre-periphery divide and the adoption of liberal capitalist economic policies. The analysis is that production in the peripheral economies are backward and that it is difficult to make technical progress, resulting in slow growth in productivity. Further, there was an excess supply of labour, which acted on prices and local demand to cause deterioration in the terms of trade in the sectors with

low productivity. The reduction of productivity and the worsening terms of trade were seen as leading to unequal development between the centre and the periphery.

Import substitution policies as a development strategy based on this belief failed. Industrialisation resulted in higher outflows than inflows of capital, causing balance of payments problems. Further, production was skewed towards meeting the needs of the local elite at the expense of the masses.

### **3.3.3. Dependency as a Concept and Analytical Tool**

Dependency as a concept and tool of analysis of concrete situations of dependency is based on the work of Cardoso (1977). This approach saw the economies in peripheral countries being integrated into a world capitalist system. This perspective argued that the determining and decisive forces of development lay outside the periphery in the centre and that development in the periphery was determined from the centre. This approach also acknowledged the role of multinational corporations (MNCs) and their impact on centre-periphery relationships, especially the availability of foreign capital for development.

Sayigh (1991) provides a useful summary of the dependency school of development.

1. *A small group of advanced Western countries dominate a group of less developed countries;*
2. *These dominant countries transfer power to transnational corporations in the form of 'foreign aid' and skim the economic surplus generated in the recipient country*
3. *These dominant countries inhibit self-determination and development in the host countries, thereby perpetuating dependence and*
4. *Internal country factors such as class structure, interest group and institutions designed to serve the powerful also perpetuate a dependency*  
(Cited in Kochhar, 1997:106)

### **3.3.4 A Critique of Dependency Theory**

Dependency theory came under heavy criticism in the early 1970s. The initial criticism was levelled at the work of Frank (1967), and this may have been largely due to him

writing in English while the other writers wrote in Spanish, which most Western scholars could not access. The initial criticism was of the claim by Frank, that Latin America had been a capitalist economy from colonial times and that there was no question of the existence of the dual society (traditional and modern) claimed by the modernists. This assertion came under heavy fire even from Latin American economists, especially Laclau (1971) who argued that Frank (1967) had a misconception of capitalism and that capitalism was a mode of production rather than a mode of exchange.

Among the early critics of dependency theory was O'Brien (1975)

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*and they lack this because they are dependent. (O'Brien, 1975:24.)*

Even Frank, the West's most famous exponent of dependency, ended up thinking:

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*praxis of development. (Cited in Leys, 1996:32).*

These candid admissions by Frank reflect the criticisms levelled at dependency theory in its heyday.

The performance of the Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) created further difficulties for dependency theory. Much of the success of the South East Asian economies had been attributed to neo-liberal laissez faire economic policies, until the work of Hamilton (1986), White (1987), Wade (1990) and Morris (1996). They found that the NICs had demonstrated the exact opposite of laissez faire neo-liberal policies and had shown the

necessity for forceful, systematic and sustained economic intervention by strong centralised states pursuing a long-term coherent strategy. Dependency could not explain these developments.

Later criticisms began to question the empirical evidence supporting the dependency thesis, that differences in degree of dependency were causally related to differences in economic development. The hypothesis was that the more dependent a country was, the more underdeveloped it was, as measured by a range of indicators. However, the analyses of country data failed to support the hypothesis.

While interest in dependency theory as a general theory of underdevelopment has waned, its perspectives as a 'concept & analytical tool' and 'obstacle to development' remain relevant. Today, the concept is now well embedded in the study of development and its existence is unquestioned, even if there is disagreement about the causes and the right policy prescriptions.

Dependency as a theory of underdevelopment could be said to be as valid as any other, given that there is no evidence that any of the other theories have provided a better or satisfactory explanation of the causes of underdevelopment, and propose more effective policy prescriptions. The failure of many countries to achieve the level of development by following policies based on dependency theory must be a great disappointment to all concerned.

However, there may be some hope yet. As Sander (1985) remarked:

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*proposals for overcoming historically entrenched situations. (Sander, 1985:199).*

Sander's suggestion to develop concrete proposals could be the challenge, to spark off a revival of interest in dependency theory.

### **3.4 The Rise of Interest in the Development of Small States**

Interest in the development of small states is relatively recent, starting in the 1950s at the dawn of decolonisation. The initial concern then was about the economic viability of the small ex-colonies as independent states. Small size emerged as an important factor in the decolonisation debate, and was often cited as the major reason for rejecting the call for independence from the smaller colonies.

As countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific became independent in the 1950s and 1960s, there was renewed concern about the role and place of small states on the international scene.

#### **3.4.1 The Economic Dimension**

The first major published work on small economies was a book edited by Robinson (1960) entitled, *The Economic Consequences of the Size of Nations*. It was published following a conference of the International Economic Association in 1957. The main concern of the conference was with issues of economic efficiency and size of small European economies, several of which were already at an advanced stage of development. However, it did not include any of the countries that currently fall in the small state category.

The first published work on small states was by Demas (1965), who published a landmark work on the economic development of the small island states of the Caribbean. He argued that the economic structure of a small state was fundamentally different from that of a large state. What he was saying in essence was that, a small state is *not* a miniaturised version of a large state and required a different analytical framework. This is a very important point, which has implications for the understanding of the structure of economies, the analytical framework, tools of analysis and most importantly, the policies to be adopted.

This represented a marked departure from the then current orthodoxy on economic development, which was based on modernisation policies, with developing countries, large and small, following the same policies.

Benedict (1967) edited the next major work on small states, *Problems of Smaller Territories*. This work also focused on the economic viability of small states but went further in attempting to explain the socio-economic and political dimensions of small states and their impact on economic growth. Like previous works on small states, it concentrated on economic development. This was the first attempt to describe the context and sociological dynamics in small states and acknowledgement that they were characteristics unique to small states that might affect their development. The contribution by Benedict (1967) was groundbreaking in its attempt to explore the social concomitant of smallness and whether the differences between small and large states were merely quantitative or whether there were qualitative differences.

However, like all previous works on economic development in small states the focus was mainly on the constraints imposed by size and the obstacles to development.

In 1972 the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex, convened a conference in Barbados to consider the issue of economic dependence of the region and its implications for development. The papers presented at the conference, were later published in a book entitled *Development Policy in Small Countries* edited by Selwyn (1975). Besides the technical analysis of economic development, the book considered external obstacles to development including dependency as it relates to small economies and the particular effects of the adverse terms of trade facing primary producers.

A similar conference took place in Australia, which considered the development problems of the South Pacific. The papers that were presented at this conference were also published under the title *The Island States of the South Pacific and Indian Oceans* edited by Shand (1980).

Another landmark in the literature on development in small states was the 1981 Marlborough House (London) Conference on Small Economies. The papers were also published in a book edited by Jalan (1982), *Problems and Policies in Small Economies*. This work attempted to address some analytical and policy issues of development in small states. The conference brought together academics and practitioners from all over the world, and included for the first time, practitioners and academics from small states to provide a small state perspective.

Lockhart, Drakis-Smith & Schembri (1993) edited a book entitled, *The Development Process in Small States*. It contained several papers on various aspect of development of small states from the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Mediterranean. The particular focus of these papers was the idea of "islandness" and the features peculiar to islands and their impact and implications for development were explored.

The focus of the early work on economic development in small states was consistent with the dominant neo-classical theory of economic growth and development. Although the published works after 1967 concentrated on the broader issue of development as opposed to purely economic growth, they also came to the same broad conclusion: that smallness imposed economic disadvantages that had to be overcome. For example, Kuznet (1960) concluded:

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*institutions to overcome the disadvantages of size. (Kuznet, 1960:31).*

This growing body of literature has no doubt, enhanced understanding of the development process in small states. It has also gone some way towards providing much needed information to inform policy.

However, there are still major deficiencies. Conceptual problems regarding smallness remain, the analytical framework that Demas (1965) called for is yet to be developed and there are very few signs of an emerging theory of economic development in small states.



While the interest in the economic development of small states continued, a parallel interest in the educational development in small states was also developing.

### **3.4.2 Educational Development in Small States**

The interest in education in small states is quite recent and only began in the early 1980s. The initial thrust was by the Commonwealth Secretariat who had developed an interest in education in small states, largely because most of its members fall into the "small state" category. Seminal works in this field were by Brock (1984), Packer (1984), Bray & Fergus (1986) and Bacchus (1987). Since the appearance of these seminal works, many academics and practitioners including a handful from small states have been writing on the subject.

Most writers on small states and especially the pioneers of this work (Brock, 1984; Bray, 1986; Packer, 1984) followed in the tradition of the earlier writers on economic development (Robinson, 1965; Demas; 1965) focusing on the problems resulting from smallness and applying them to educational development. The analyses have concentrated on the features and characteristics of small states and an attempt to describe their implications for educational development. Later writers such as Chiew (1993) tried to redress the balance by pointing the potential strengths, advantages and opportunities presented by smallness. This followed the earlier works by Best (1966) who saw smallness as a challenge for development in the Caribbean.

The first major work on education in small states (Brock, 1984) considered the impact of Scale, Isolation and Dependence on educational development. The same broad themes were taken up at The Pan Commonwealth Experts meeting in Mauritius in 1985, which identified the major implications of smallness for education (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1985), which are summarised below:

- *the small scale of educational administration suggests multi-purpose roles for educational administrators*
  - *smallness of population restricts the possibility of developing within the education system, a full range of specialist facilities and options.*
  - *economic vulnerability and uncertainty facing small countries imply that, in terms of their technical and vocational training provision countries must look to produce polyvalent workers.....*
  - *the limited number of positions poses particular challenges in arranging for senior people to be released for extended periods.*
  - *issues of education dependence must be squarely faced.*
- (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1985:4-5)*

This was a landmark contribution to the debate, because most of the later writings have been expansions and development of those themes.

It is not surprising therefore, that the work that followed this conference concentrated on the problems and constraints imposed by smallness. Thus, Brock (1988) tells us that:

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*metropolitan powers. (Brock, 1988:173).*

Bray & Packer (1993), among the early writers in this field, also told us that:

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*use overseas. (Bray & Packer, 1993: 98)*

While this is an important issue for small states, because its size and limited resource make the provision of certain services locally prohibitive, this is not and was never the central policy debate in education in small states. However, the policy now seems settled, which is to develop local provision. The issue of debate is how best to expand secondary and tertiary education, improve the quality of education and ensure that the education system produces people with the skills needed to help the economy become more competitive.

### 3.5 Characteristics of Small States: Conceptual and Definitional Issues

The definition of what constitutes a small state has changed several times in the relatively short history of small states as an academic field of study. In the seminal work by Robinson (1960), a small nation was described as one with up to ten million inhabitants. Another dimension was added by Demas (1965), who described a small state as one with less than five million people of population and between 10,000 and 20,000 square miles of land area. Shand (1980), differentiated between categories of small states. He defined small states as those with populations of greater than 250,000, very small states as those with populations of between 25,000 and 250,000 and microstates as those with less than 25,000 inhabitants. Smawfield (1986) constructed a typology using university provision as the key criterion for deciding smallness, that is, whether the state has more than one university, a single university, or none.

The commonly accepted definition of a small state is one with a population of up to 1.5 million. However, it is problematic. As Bray and Packer (1993) noted:

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1993:3)

Brock (1988) had earlier noted:

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*necessity be arbitrary. (Brock, 1988:167)*

This problem arises because other criteria such as land area and GNP can also be indicators of size, and there is not necessarily any correlation between all three. Consequently, some attempts have been made to develop an index of smallness based on the three main variables indicating scale: population, land area and GNP. (Shand, 1980;

Jalan, 1982; Downes, 1988).

A precise and absolute definition of small is of course problematic. While a country may see itself as small in relation to some countries, it may see itself as large compared to countries much smaller than itself. For example, Trinidad & Tobago would see itself as small compared to Great Britain but sees itself as large compared to say, Antigua or St. Lucia.

The arbitrary nature of the criteria for smallness presents several problems. While the problems of definition are generally acknowledged, there is disagreement about the significance of these problems, and their implications for development.

The issue of definition is quite important because it has implications for policy. If policy prescriptions for small states are to stand any chance of success, there should at least be common understanding of the factors that are critical for policy. This common understanding does not yet exist.

### **3.5.1 Measuring Smallness.**

In this context, it would be helpful to have a measure of size or smallness, not defined arbitrarily but for which there was some empirical or statistical basis. Bray and Packer (1993) in their very comprehensive text on education in small states noted that some writers (Shand, 1984; Brock, 1984) had tried to combine the three main indicators: population, land area and GNP. However, they rejected the mathematical and statistical attempts to develop indices as approaches for understanding the relationship between smallness of scale and educational development, concluding that it was of no virtue, but gave no reasons for that conclusion.

This may have been a mistaken conclusion. If a statistical measurement of smallness could be developed, it would go a very long way towards overcoming the problem of arbitrary determination of smallness and provide a single index of scale avoiding the complexity and confusion of using three separate indicators.

However, none of these provides an absolute or definitive definition of smallness to allow realistic comparisons to be made, although some advances have been made towards developing a composite index of scale. Jalan (1982), attempted to derive an index of size using land area, population and gross national product. He derived an equally weighted index of the three components and came up with a list of 59 countries. The major limitation of this approach was the assumption of equal importance of the variables, which had no statistical basis. The assumption also seemed unduly restrictive.

Downes (1988), took the attempt to develop an index of scale work one step further, and attempted to develop a weighted index of scale to decide smallness. The weights were based on the relative importance of the particular variable, in a composite index. This went some way towards improving the problem of weighting in Jalan's work (1982). The usefulness of this composite index is that it can be used to analyse the collective effects on economic and other developmental variable including education. This makes it easier to identify small countries by using an order statistic such as quartile or cluster analysis to group countries according to size. Although Downes acknowledged the limitations to the methodology, they did not appear to be fundamentally different from the limitations normally encountered in formulating indices.

In spite of these limitations, the composite index provides a measure that overcomes the deficiencies of the uni-dimensional measure of size and incorporates the major variables. Correlating the indices with the socio-economic, economic, cultural, education and other phenomenon associated with small states might be an area for further research.

### **3.5.2 Economic Constraints**

That size imposes certain economic constraints on small states is generally acknowledged in the literature. (Knox 1967; Demas 1967; Bray 1984; Smawfield 1985; Atchoarena, 1993). As shown earlier, the initial interest in the development of small states was concerned with their ability to achieve economic growth and their viability. The Commonwealth Secretariat (1985) acknowledged that:

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*(Commonwealth Secretariat, 1985:16).*

It was further acknowledged that:

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*1985:17).*

The inability of small states to benefit from economies of scale was the proposition argued by Kuznet (1960), Demas (1965) and Benedict (1967) and Knox (1967).

Kuznet (1960) argued that:

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*typically less diversified than that of larger units. (Kuznet, 1960:15)*

He argued further, that this resulted in the concentration of industry in a narrow range of products, usually geared towards the export market. This heavy reliance on foreign trade, where the terms of trade move against small states makes them vulnerable to the vagaries of trade. This analysis was further developed by Knox (1967), who concluded that there were market imperfections that restricted the freedom of small states to sell in foreign markets because of higher costs.

Powell (1973) concluded from a study on economic development in the Caribbean that:

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*economic stagnation...(Powell, 1973:9).*

The small size of a country is thought to limit the scope for large-scale industrial development because of the limited size of the domestic market. Consequently, it has been claimed that they cannot reap the benefits from economies of scale. However, this analysis may no longer be valid in small states. While the size of a country or its economy may limit the potential for economies of scale, the size of the domestic market is less of a limiting factor to industrial development in the age of globalisation.

As a general economic proposition, the size of the domestic market as a prerequisite for industrial development may have never held true for the Caribbean. The economies were historically based on the production of sugar, rum, and tobacco and later, bananas for the export market. Tourism, which is the mainstay of several Caribbean economies, is still for the export market.

The increasing globalisation of economic activity, combined with advanced communication and travel, renders the domestic market less important as a factor determining the potential for growth. Until the recent troubles, the very successful Southeast Asian economies had prospered largely, by producing for a predominantly export market (Morris, 1996). Moreover free trade and the formation of trading blocs are formed such as the European Union (EU), North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), serve not only to erode domestic boundaries and national barriers to economic activity in which all economic activities become increasingly linked internationally. This phenomenon presents opportunities for those countries able to compete globally, but poses a serious threat to small economies as those in the Caribbean, which will not be able to compete.

Small states are probably more constrained by the lack of direct access to international financial markets and the difficulty in attracting private investment, resulting in constant shortages of capital for investment.

Many small states rely quite heavily on foreign aid to finance educational projects. Foreign assistance, whether it is bilateral aid from international agencies or loans from

institutions like the World Bank and IMF have made possible, the implementation of many educational projects, which otherwise might not have happened.

However, this reliance on foreign assistance has the effect of undermining the recipient country's ability to implement policies of their choice, giving rise to educational dependence.

### **3.5.3 Demographic Constraints**

Small island states by virtue of their size must choose from a small pool of available talent. This means that the skills required are not always available in the areas and to the standards needed, and often results in the employment of expatriate staff, who are not only expensive to employ, but may also be unsuitable. The high incidence and pattern of emigration from islands further exacerbate the human resource problem.

Emigration has always been a feature of island development. The Caribbean experienced a high rate of emigration to the United Kingdom after the Second World War in response to the demand for labour to rebuild the British economy from the devastation caused by the war. Economic opportunities and the liberal emigration policies of both Canada and the United States, especially in the 1960s prompted emigration to North America, when Britain tightened its emigration policy, which effectively ended primary emigration from the Caribbean. Many of those who migrated were the young, professional men initially, exacerbating the already difficult problem of skill shortages, which impacted adversely on the domestic economy.

The "brain drain" has been claimed to be problematic. Many people from small states go to metropolitan countries for higher education, a high proportion of them never return. This creates problems in the domestic economy to find sufficient numbers of people with relevant skills to contribute to the development effort.

It is argued here, that the shortage of trained staff is due to the low absorptive capacity of the small economies, and not their inability to produce the quality and calibre of people



needed. Some economies are so small that they can sustain only one post in certain fields. Consequently, other qualified and trained staff emigrate. The problem is therefore, not the lack of capacity to produce people but the inability to keep them.

It could be argued however, that emigration has provided a useful outlet for highly trained and skilled people, who otherwise might have been unemployed or underemployed, which could have given rise to domestic social problems. Moreover, those who emigrate send remittances back, providing much needed foreign exchange and boosting the local economy. Many also invest in their home economies providing much needed capital for investment.

A further constraint of smallness is the absence of tertiary level educational provision. This has been described by Brock (1989) as the 'topless' education system meaning that, the top tier of the education system (tertiary level education) is usually missing. Consequently, many countries send their nationals to study and train overseas. Not only is this very costly, but there are also concerns about the appropriateness of such training and its role in contributing to continued dependence.

While tertiary and university provision in particular may be missing in many small states, this situation is being challenged by some small states. Brunei Darussalam, Cyprus and Malta, all small states have their own universities. The Seychelles has a polytechnic that provides further and higher education. In the Caribbean, several OECS community colleges are already teaching first and second years of degree courses of the University of the West Indies. St. Lucia is already offering a full degree in educational administration. It may only be a matter of time before the emergence of a University of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

This development will mean that the absence of tertiary level education can no longer be regarded as a feature of small states. However, it does not mean that these states in question cease to be small. The absence of full education provision in a small state may be a reflection of the particular stage in the development process, rather than a feature unique to small states. The development of information and communication technology

and the internet in particular, could make higher education more widely available (assuming that learners in small states have the means of accessing the technology). However, it is likely to lead to further dependence, given Western and US domination in particular of these developments.

However, there may still be difficulties in setting up university level education in small states. For example Brunei Darussalam and Seychelles both experience difficulty in attracting sufficient numbers of students to make university education cost effective and viable as well as recruiting staff, for which they rely on overseas sources. The development of Information and Communication Technology is already making higher education more widely available around the world, but the US is the dominant provider, which might lead to further dependency.

#### **3.5.4 Sociological Constraints**

Cameron (1970), in his study of Maltese society, provided a comprehensive and vibrant account that captures the essence and impact of these relationships in small societies:

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*easy. This has been true of education as of anything else. (Cameron, 1972:34)*

This vivid and accurate description also holds for small Caribbean states including St. Lucia.

The scale of these societies and their compactness also means that it becomes relatively easy to meet key people and to implement decisions. It may also be the case that the small size enables more efficient structures to be set up not requiring vast capital expenditure. Small systems may also have the advantage of not suffering dis-economies of scale.

Another consequence of smallness is the multiplex nature of small societies, in that every social relationship serves many interests. In a small state it is argued, it is quite likely that decisions, action and behaviour will be influenced by the many different relationships that individuals have with each other. It may also be difficult sometimes, to differentiate decisions arising from particularistic and those arising from professional relationships since they are likely to be intertwined.

The suggestion is that personal relationships influence decisions and give rise to corruption, nepotism, promotion based on considerations other than merit.

Wood (1967) attached sinister connotations to the closely-knit nature of small societies:

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*so to speak, constantly penned together for work and play. (Wood, 1967:33)*

The implication that decisions in small states are taken at the personal level because of the personalised nature of the small societies is misleading. All the small states that are members of the Commonwealth have the appropriate machinery in place for decision-making.

Louisy (1994), was quite correct in arguing that too much is made of this problem and its implied consequences. It could also be argued that the closely-knit nature of small societies should not be seen as a problem but rather, as a natural phenomenon in the functioning of small societies. On the contrary, it would be very odd and unnatural, if people who lived in close proximity to each other in a small society did not have this kind of close relationship and began to behave very differently in an impersonal way, alien to the society.

### 3.6. Advantages of Smallness

Much of the work on education in small states has attempted to identify the features that characterise small states, about which there is virtually no disagreement. The thrust of the analyses of the impact of smallness has been that, it presents a multiplicity of disadvantages, implying undesirability and thus, a negative connotation in the development process. Chiew (1993) is one of the few writers who have attempted to redress the balance by arguing that while smallness brings many problems, it also presents many opportunities and challenges. However, other writers are beginning to acknowledge the opportunities presented by smallness.

Chiew (1993) saw smallness as opportunity. She contended that there was increasing uncertainty along many fronts: economic, social, monetary, military and environmental. She argued that in the context of this dynamic turbulence, small systems might be in a better position to cope with and survive rapid changes in the environment than large ones. This is because in smaller systems there is the potential for absence of bureaucratic constrictions. As she put it:

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*problem-oriented one towards one of opportunity. (Chiew, 1993:48.)*

She further added that:

*Smallness of scale among nations, rather than being perceived as an obstacle in self-development, may benefit from changing the perception to one of opportunity. (Chiew, 1993:58).*

However, she went on to proffer that:

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*optimization of two crucial ideas: flexibility and creativity. (Chiew, 1993:52).*

The difficulty with this suggestion lies in its application. In an increasingly

interdependent world; where competition becomes global, it is unlikely that small states, given some of the constraints they experience can find that level of optimisation, flexibility and creativity that are being suggested. Moreover, local policy decisions in education cannot take place in isolation from what happens internationally. There is a constant need to adjust to take account of international developments.

Atchoarena (1993) also sees advantages:

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*financial resources. (Atchoarena, 1993:67).*

Perhaps the point that should have been stressed is that, there is potential for more efficient allocation of resources, because the experience and evidence from small states in the Caribbean is to the contrary, because they have unwieldy and bureaucratic systems of administration and inefficient deployment of resources. (Murray, 1981; Hope, 1983; Khan, 1990; Boich, 1991).

It is conceivable that that size confers certain advantages in the drive towards development: It limits the volume of needs to be addressed by development strategies. For the countries providing aid, external markets and emigration outlets, the cost of such policies is rather limited, if not marginal. In small states, low cost measures in absolute terms can easily have a tremendous impact on the entire economy and population.

The assumption seems to have been made that small scale as epitomised by smaller scale in services is easier to achieve than large volume, but this is not necessarily the case. Low volume and smaller scale still requires provision of a full range of functions and support infrastructure to deliver services.

While there are advantages in being small, in the final analysis, two important factors should be considered. One is whether small states have the ability to exploit the advantages arising from smallness and whether the advantages outweigh the constraints

of smallness. All the indications are that the advantages are not decisive.

### 3.7 Dependence in Education

The concept of dependency has been applied to education. Like economic dependency, application of the concept to education was in rejection of the dominant approach to educational development derived from modernisation theories.

The basic thesis of educational dependence is that certain forces in society (in developed countries) contribute to developing countries remaining educationally and culturally dependent on larger metropolitan countries, which affect their ability to achieve their own educational objectives. This dependence is reflected in all areas of educational development. One of the main factors that contribute to that dependence is foreign aid, whether it is financial or technical assistance, management of educational institutions, teacher training, universities, curriculum and examinations or textbooks.

Seers (1981) gave a clear analysis of the process through which educational dependence is created and perpetuated:

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*the appropriateness for the local context. (Seers, 1981:140).*

Given the historical context of the Caribbean, educational dependence is inextricably linked to the colonial legacy. The implications of colonialism for education was summarised by Bray (1994) as follows, drawing on Altbach and Kelly (1978)

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*cultural orientations in common. (Bray, 1993:334)*

This situation is reflected in the historical development of education in the Caribbean, which was characterised by: an education system that served the needs of the colonial power, the irrelevance of the curriculum, squabbles between church and state over the control of and an excessive concern with academic attainment and underdevelopment of technical and vocational education in many islands. For example, St. Lucia did not have an institution of technical and vocational education until the early 1970s.

One of the major educational legacies inherited from the colonial era is that the educational structures inherited from the colonial era remains intact, perpetuated largely by the continued contact with and reliance on the former colonial powers for assistance with every conceivable aspect of educational development.

The existence of educational dependency is widely acknowledged. As Altbach and Kelly (1978) proffered:

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*metropolitan power influence. (Cited in Watson, 1984:4.)*

Increasing globalisation has also accentuated the related phenomenon of cultural dependency. As Carnoy (1974) noted:

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*emerging. (Cited in Watson Ed., 1984:51).*

This is even more so in the Caribbean today than it was 25 years ago, and is potentially one of the most harmful consequences of dependency. Not only has it caused the adoption of foreign values, especially American, which at best results in a failure to appreciate local cultural norms and values, and at worst, a rejection and repudiation of local culture and values. The material danger is that foreign values are not just regarded

as being different, but better, and local people try to adopt them. Some of this may be due to many current leaders from former colonies being educated in the West some time ago, and hold educational values that are no longer current or was ever appropriate for their countries.

While most Caribbean states are politically independent, which should have effectively marked the end of colonialism; a neo-colonialism has developed, perpetuating some of the condition that prevailed under colonialism. As Carnoy (1974) observed:

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*the dependent system. (Carnoy, 1974:98)*

Neo-colonialism in the Caribbean is captured in the satirical novel, *Mimic Men* by the Caribbean novelist Naipaul. In the book, he colourfully describes political life in the postcolonial period in a fictitious Caribbean island. He describes how the travail of politicians bumbling and floundering in the attempt to manage the economy. They find their attempts undermined by the foreign control of major industries and an unscrupulous business community who abuse tax incentives for investing in the economy. The neo-colonists give the impression of having power and behave as such, but have no real power and at the mercy of the powers that control the economy. This type of behaviour that developed in the immediate post colonial period is still very prevalent today, especially in the public sector, where senior public officials are treated with great deference.

However, not everyone agrees that dependency analysis can be applied to education. McLean (1983) noted that there were conceptual difficulties in applying economic dependency theory to educational issues.



He argued:

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*latter. (McLean, 1983:37).*

Even if it is accepted that educational institutions and cultural values are different from capital flows, the important point here is they result in dependence. The mechanisms and modes of transfer may be different but the concrete situations of dependency that follows are the same.

Olivera (1985) rejects the very proposition that education in Latin America is dependent. He differentiated between what he calls decisive influence and dependency. He accepts dependence as 'a state of direct, unequivocal subordination, which can in general be detected point-by-point and decision-by-decision'. He applied these criteria to the development of education of Latin America and came to the following conclusion:

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*any substance. (Olivera, 1985:234).*

This disagreement about whether the education system in Latin America is dependent, highlight some crucial differences between Latin America and the small Caribbean States. Even by Olivera's definition, education in the Caribbean is dependent. This means that there would be different explanations for the current state of educational development, which would in turn require different policy prescriptions. These differences and the extent to which the development strategies being proposed by agencies like ECLA<sup>6</sup> may be inappropriate for the small Caribbean states are often overlooked.

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6. A major example of this is the ECLA document, Education in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Education and Knowledge: Basic Pillars of Changing Production Patterns with Social Equity, Santiago, 1990. It proposes a strategy for development in the region, which is inapplicable to the small states in the Caribbean.

### 3.8 Educational Dependence in Small States

The education system in small states is thought to display high levels of dependence, in the sense that it is dependent on foreign support and assistance, whether it is in the form of technical expertise, finance, curriculum, textbooks, validation, pedagogy or epistemology.

Brock & Smawfield explain dependence in small states as follows:

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*priorities (Bacchus & Brock Ed, 1987:5-6)*

This situation is not unique to small states and applies equally to large states, especially the recipients of aid from international organisations such as the World Bank, the IMF and UNESCO. The structural adjustment programme (SAP) – a usual condition of IMF lending, exerts great influence and often decides the policies of borrowers. There is no evidence to suggest that small states are more susceptible than large states in that respect.

The existence of cultural dependency has also been recognised:

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*states in favour of the latter. (Brock & Smawfield, 1988:236)*

Atchoarena (1993) saw vulnerability as an exacerbated form of dependency, by which not only the development, but even the survival of the society depends on relations with the outside world. This contribution by Atchoarena is one of the few that recognises the powerlessness of small states and the power of international forces such as globalisation that restricts the scope for autonomous action by small states.

Bacchus (1989) explained how educational dependency manifests in small states:

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*recipients. (Bacchus, 1989:8).*

In describing the nature of the dependency dimension in Maltese education, Farrugia (1991) concluded

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*1991:592)*

While there is an abundance of literature that analyses and critiques dependency theory and educational dependency (Seers, 1981; McLean, 1985) there is hardly any literature that analyses dependency within the context of small states. The references to educational dependence in the small states tend to accept uncritically, the dependency framework. The several approaches or perspectives to educational dependence are hardly mentioned and neither is there any reference to the contentious nature of dependence theory.

Further, educational dependence is invariably presented as harmful to the dependent country. The dependent countries are portrayed as powerless victims of the sinister and selfish policies of the developed world. Much of the literature on dependence and colonialism has dealt largely with process and occasionally allude to anecdotal evidence of the dangers of dependence. However, there is little analysis based on empirical research to show how dependency has affected a dependent country's ability to achieve

*predetermined* educational objectives.

While dependence undoubtedly has adverse consequences, realistic alternatives to dependence and options have hardly received any serious attention. This points to an area for further research.

Aid is generally regarded as a major contributor to educational dependence and there is no doubt that it contributes to dependence. However, the amount of foreign aid is a very small proportion of the total expenditure on education, and raises the question of how, and whether such a small proportion of total educational expenditure is responsible for the underdevelopment of the education system. A further matter that needs to be considered in this context is the extent to which internal factors and forces contribute to educational dependency. As the World Bank Educational Sector Policy Paper (1980) pointed out:

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*low civil service salaries and a high turnover of staff. (World Bank, 1980)*

The issue of dependence is particularly critical to small states. It is conceivable that some large developing countries could potentially develop their education system with very little reliance on external sources of assistance. However, small states like those of the OECS are not in a position to contemplate such independent action, because they are too heavily reliant on foreign assistance. If the foreign assistance were to stop, there would be a strong likelihood of economic collapse.

Dependence is closely linked with the phenomenon of globalisation, which has called into question the ability of national states to take autonomous action in securing economic prosperity. Globalisation has relevance to educational policy in that the quality of a country's education system is generally seen as holding the key to economic prosperity. This is particularly so in the knowledge economy, where all governments have declared that the quality of the training system and its ability to deliver the skills required will be

decisive in gaining international competitiveness advantages.

Globalisation also has the effect of reducing a country's capacity to take autonomous policy action, but creates similar challenges. As Dale (1999) argued

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*globalisation on the discretion and direction of nation states. (Dale, 1999:2)*

The major consequence is that nation states will have to adapt their education systems to respond to international competitive pressures. The ability and capacity of small states to do so effectively is very limited.

### **3.9 Educational Administration**

There is a growing literature on education administration in developing countries (Haag, 1982; Malpica & Rassekh, 1983; Commonwealth Secretariat 1993). Much of the work on educational administration has been sponsored by international organisations such as UNESCO and Commonwealth Secretariat. Some literature is beginning to emerge on educational administration in small states.

Much of the literature on educational administration and management in small states covers four main aspects of educational management and administration: educational planning, policymaking, the organisation and structure of ministries of education and the training of educational administrator (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1982; Miller 1990; Bray, 1991; Lillis, 1993; Atchoarena, 1993). However, there is hardly any literature that examines the administration of education at the sub-national level in small states, especially at the level of the school.

The Commonwealth Secretariat sponsored a project in 1989 that examined the management and organisation of ministries of education in small states, which was carried out by Mark Bray. The findings were published in a book edited by Bray (1991a),

*Ministries of Education in Small States* and in Bray (1991b), *Making Small Practical*. These two publications are currently the most comprehensive study on the organisation and management of education in small states. Again, the emphasis was on the constraints of small size as Bray (1991b), reminded us:

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*size on operating full planning units. (Bray, 1991b: 7).*

The focus of the book appears to be based on the perspectives provided by the case studies, which were provided by policy makers and practitioners from small states, who were involved in managing their education systems. Although first hand experience of how the systems operate is very helpful, the enormity of the problems appeared to have been understated, and in several cases attributed the lack of progress, which was in turn blamed on the lack of resources, due to small size.

The cases studies reported were very descriptive, giving detailed accounts of the organisation and operation of ministries of education in small states, but lacked any critical analysis, although it provided useful insights on the organisation and structure of small education systems.

As to the assessment of administrative structures, Bray (1991) concluded that:

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*(Bray (1991b: 9).*

This problem still plagues educational administration in the Caribbean today. Much of this is due to the inherited traditions from the colonial era. Not only has neo-colonialism taken root, but also there is either a reluctance or inability to fundamentally restructure the inherited institutional structures and procedures.

Boich (1992) in a consultancy report on educational administration and management reform in small Commonwealth states concluded:

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*and other factors make administrative reform incredibly difficult. (Boich, 1991:v).*

He further advised:

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*the civil service. (Boich, 1991:v).*

Generalisations like this give the impression that the whole of the public service is staffed by incompetent and poorly trained and qualified staff. This also betrays a lack of understanding of the dynamics and structural complexities of human resource issues in small states.

It was argued earlier that the human resource problem was one of retention due to the low absorptive capacity of the economy. However, the antiquated and bureaucratic organisation of public services prevents staff from being more effective, and the system is in need of reform (Khan, 1990).

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*management is striking. (Khan, 1990:1.)*

After the Jomtien Conference in 1990, The Commonwealth Secretariat set up a project with African countries to develop training and support materials for headteachers. A series entitled Better Schools<sup>7</sup> (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1993) was produced, consisting of seven different modules. One of the greatest strengths of this work was that African

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<sup>7</sup> This was produced by 7 Ministries of Education in Africa in (in Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe) assisted by Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia)

Ministries of Education produced it jointly, with most of the references being of African origin, although the Commonwealth Secretariat directed the whole exercise.

It is not known how much use was, or is being made of the material. While it seems very practical and helpful, the series lacks theoretical and conceptual depth, giving the impression of superficiality. Some of the material is rather rudimentary, and includes exercises in simple and basic things such as how to complete bank deposit and withdrawals forms.

### **3.10 Limitations of the Existing Literature**

The literature on education in small states is quite recent. The early work focused mainly on problems arising because of small scale. Consequently, most of the solutions being proffered for small states have attempted to address the constraints imposed by small scale.

The literature concentrates too much on the issues of size and population in defining smallness. Insufficient attention is paid to the diversity among small states since there is no firm evidence that size is the major determinant of the features associated with smallness. For example, it can be argued that the factors that determine and shape education in Botswana, are very different from those in St. Lucia, which are both small states within the scope of this study and would require different policy prescriptions. This is an area that merits further study.

The more recent literature on small states has begun to recognise that small states, although suffering from constraints also presents opportunities and have certain advantages. However, the thrust of the literature still centres on problems, with very little by way of solutions.

Much of the emphasis has been concerned with the features of small states and how they affect educational development. Dependence is often seen as having an adverse effect on educational development. Yet, is unclear whether there is sufficient local understanding of the issues and how it impacts on educational development, much less developing a strategy for managing it.



The literature generally focuses on areas such as educational provision, curriculum issues, human resources and the organisation and structure of education system. There is hardly any literature on the governance and management of schools in small states. Yet, this is critical to small states as they strive to manage their education systems more efficiently and effectively.

The literature is conspicuously silent on the issue on educational decentralisation in small states, although there is a growing literature on public administration. This is quite important to small states like St. Lucia that has chosen to decentralise, with other small states sure to follow.

Writers and scholars from small states have contributed very little to the burgeoning literature. While the contributions of writers from large states, especially the West is to be valued; it is a continued form of intellectual dependence and the small state perspective, vital for a balanced view of the small states issue is sadly missing. There is a need for more practitioners and scholars from small states to contribute their perspective to the literature, especially if they hope to influence policy.

A detailed discussion of the issues pertinent to the small states in the Caribbean and the Organisation of Caribbean States (OECS) in particular is provided in the next chapter.

### **3.11 Study Perspective**

It is clear from the review of the literature on small states that the interest in education in small states has revolved round the constraints imposed by scale and how they can be addressed. The recent literature has also revealed an increasing concern with the quality of education as opposed to the previous quantity and curriculum matters. The managerial revolution has now reached small states and the impact of good management on school performance acknowledged. Thus, the need to manage efficiently and effectively has become all-important. How the education system is controlled, structured and organised, how schools are managed, governed, the role and professional development of principals,

performance measurement and policy making and implementation are major foci of this study.

The study focuses on management at the school level and assesses the efficacy of policies and practices in meeting the challenges of educational administration and management. It is hoped that this will make a significant contribution to the understanding of educational development in St. Lucia, which will have implications for other small states.

The study deliberately gives prominence to the perceptions of policy makers and practitioners from small states, to redress the balance and encourage more local and relevant research. Consequently, a deliberate effort to reference sources from small states in general and the Caribbean in particular. Very importantly too, the study proposes a framework within which the education system can be administered and managed more efficiently and effectively to improve performance.

*They (small states) have demonstrated that they have a valid part to play in the evolution of world society. It is therefore imperative that the international system be so organised, that these states are enabled, not only to exist, but also to prosper and themselves to contribute to international harmony. (Sir Shridath Ramphal)*

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Development Issues in Small States: The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets the small states' context within which the study is conducted, focusing on the grouping of Caribbean islands called the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

The world of small states and the OECS are introduced, followed by a critical assessment of the characteristics and features of small states that pertain to them.

The concepts of efficiency and effectiveness as applied to education are examined, followed by an overview of the development imperatives for the sub-region.

#### **4.2 The World of Small States**

Small states as defined in this study can be found all over the world. (Table 1) There are notable island clusters in the Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Oceans. However, while these states have much in common, there are huge diversities, which extend to all critical areas of development such as demography, geography, economy and politics.

**Table 1. The Small States of the World**

Country/Region	Population 1995 estimates (000s)	Area Sq. km	GNP/ per capita US\$1995		Country/ Region	Population 1995 estimates (000s)	Area Sq. km	GNP per capita US\$1995
<b>Africa</b>					<b>Europe</b>			
Botswana	1254	581730	3310		Andorra	61	453	E
Cape Verde	370	4033	1090		Cyprus	726	9251	10300
Comoros	607	2235	400		Faeroe Islands	47	1399	E
Djibouti	557	2300	350		Greenland	57		9200
Equatorial Guinea	379	28051	1060		Guernsey	55	na	na
Gabon	1248	267667	4120		Iceland	263	103000	27000
Guinea Bissau	1028	36135	230		Jersey	84	117	18,000
Mauritius	1091	2041	3870		Isle of Man	72	572	6200
Namibia	1461	824292	820		Liechtenstein	30	160	50,000
Sae Tome & Principe	127	964	290		Luxembourg	395	2586	45,000
Seychelles	72	455	6910		Malta	361	316	9330
Swaziland	809	17364	1520		San Marino	24	61	na
The Gambia	1042	11295	340					

<b>Asia</b>				<b>South Pacific</b>			
				American Samoa	51	199	1140
				Belau	14	na	na
Bhutan	1596	47000	430	Cook Islands	19	236	1800
Brunei Darussalam	274	5765	14120	Federal Republic of Micronesia	114	702	1810
Maldives	238	298	1180	French Polynesia	211	4000	8200
Oman	1992	212457	6380	Guam	76	541	E
Qatar	529	11000	15760	Kiribati	76	726	910
United Arab Emirates	1816	83600	22640	Marshall Islands	49	181	1920
				Nauru	11	21	na
<b>Caribbean</b>				Niue	2	260	na
Antigua & Barbuda	64	440	7380	New Caledonia	175	18575	E
Anguilla	8	96	980	Northern Marianas	47	464	E
Barbados	260	430	6230	Tonga	97	747	1010
Belize	204	22965	2670	Tokelau	2	12	950
Bermuda	62	53	35,000	Tuvulau	8000	28	na
British Virgin Islands	18	153	na	Solomon Islands	354	18896	870
Dominica	71	751	3040	Vanuatu	161	12189	13409
Grenada	92	344	3140	Wallis & Futuna	14	200	1000

Guyana	816	214969	800		Western Samoa	167	2831	730
Montserrat	11	102	7240					
Netherlands Antilles	195	800	E					
St. Kitts & Nevis	42	261	6260					
St. Lucia	138	616	3510					
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	110	388	2420					
Surinam	414	163265	3700					
The Bahamas	265	13878	11,510					
Trinidad & Tobago	1279	5130	5250					
Turks' & Caicos Islands	13	430	na					

Key: E estimated to be high income \$9656 or more  
World Bank Tables, 1995 and World Development Indicators 1997

Among the seventy-nine states and territories falling within the 1.5 million population limit, eight have populations of over a million. Thirty-six have populations of less than 100,000 inhabitants, with eight less than 10,000. In terms of wealth, 41% belong to the high-income group with a GNP per capita of \$9656 and above (1997 figures) and 17% to the low-income group with a GNP per capita of \$875 or less. There is also wide diversity in the illiteracy rates, which varies from 63% in Guinea-Bissau to 0.4% in Tonga. The world illiteracy rate for 1990 was 26.9 % with small states averaging slightly higher than the world average. Some have vast land areas with relatively small populations and others with small land areas and large populations. For example, Botswana with a population of approximately one and a quarter million inhabitants, (1995) has a land area of 581,730 sq. km; Guyana with a population of just over three quarters of a million has a land area of 214,969 sq. km. Barbados on the other hand, has a population of just over a quarter of a million and a land area of just 430 sq. km.

The significance of the disparities and differences between small states and their implications for policy and educational development has not been sufficiently explored. When the countries described as small states are examined, questions arise about the significance of these differences for practical and policy purposes. Other than size, it is difficult to see what else Guernsey for example, has in common with St. Lucia or the Maldives with the Gambia that is of significance to inform development. Further, San Marino is completely different from Tuvalu.

There may be a need to differentiate between small states with large land areas, especially the small continental states with large land areas and those with small land areas. A further distinction should also be made between small-developed states such as Jersey, San Marino and the United Arab Emirates that have little of significance in common with the OECS.

There is also an interesting point about countries reaching the 1.5million inhabitants population threshold. There is the major issue about the process of transformation from a small to a large state and what that means in terms of the dynamics of development. For

instance, does it mean that the small states' analysis no longer applies to them? Moreover, do they suddenly become free of the constraints and other features and characteristics associated with small states? These point to possible areas for further research.

The assumptions made about small states seem very general and consequently, are lacking specific applications, because they do not hold for any individual small state. A far more useful project might be to group them into categories that share significant characteristics that impact significantly on development, for analytic and policy purposes.

While islands present many unique and interesting features, the issue of interest here is whether these foster better understanding of the development of islands to enable more effective development policy decisions to be made.

There have also been attempts to distinguish islands from small mainland states and to treat them as a separate category for analytical purposes. Attempts have also been made to argue that islands are unique sociological entities. Pitt (1980) argued for a synthetic sociology of islands and that a sociological concept of islands is a most significant part of what he called 'folk sociology'. He even went on to suggest elements of a new theory of sociology of islands. His argument rested on the premise that the 'bounded' nature of islands gave rise to their unique sociological entity.

Selwyn (1980) examined the question as to whether small islands as distinct from small countries were a useful category in analytical terms. He compared Mauritius with Swaziland to see whether these classifications had any use in analytic, predictive and normative terms. He identified a number of important differences, some relating to insularity. They included differences in the types of industries, size, the extent of regional dependence, economic integration and differences that were related to insularity. He found these differences to shed little light on the general utility of the concept and none was fundamental. He concluded that, while there were many



interesting differences between islands and small countries, the distinction was not a useful category for development analysis.

There is much in Selwyn's analysis. The Caribbean islands have much more in common with Guyana, a continental country, than with other island groupings such as in the Indian or Pacific Ocean. Guyana also has much more in common with the other Caribbean islands than with other mainland small states like the Gambia or Botswana. The development issues that concern small states appear to be similar: small size, dependence, industrial diversification, and relations with foreign investors, whether they are mainland countries or islands.

While islands may be unique social groupings, associated with a certain degree of romanticism, exoticism, adventure, unique flora and fauna and ecological features, the category does not help us understand better their development and thus, does not warrant a separate classification.

### **4.3 The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States: Characteristics of Small States Revisited**

It was shown in the literature review (Chapter 3) development of small states were generally considered in terms of scale, isolation and dependence. This section re-visits these features within the context of the OECS.

The OECS was established in 1981. It is a sub-regional grouping of eight small Caribbean States (Table 2): Antigua, & Barbuda, The British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Christopher and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. It is concerned with bringing about integration in matters of social, economic, political and security. The purpose of the OECS as specified in the Treaty Article 3(3) is:

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*(OECS Treaty, 1985).*

A Central Secretariat is based in St. Lucia and an Economic Affairs Secretariat based in Antigua.

#### 4.3.1 Diversity

The OECS have a great deal in common, but there are also significant differences that impact on educational development (Table 2). They are all island states with a common history of slavery and colonialism. Their populations are quite small, ranging from St. Lucia with 138,000 inhabitants to Anguilla (one of the British Virgin Islands) with a mere 8,000. The land area of OECS states is also quite small and ranges from Dominica, with a land area of 751 sq. km to St. Kitts-Nevis with 261 sq. km. However, even within this small group of islands there are notable diversities

**Table 2. Selected Data on OECS States**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Population (000s) 1995 estimates</b>	<b>Area (Sq.km)</b>	<b>GNP Per Capita 1997</b>
Antigua & Barbuda	64	440	7380
British Virgin Islands <sup>8</sup>	18	153	na
Dominica	71	751	3040
Grenada	92	344	3140
Montserrat	11	102	7240
St. Kitts-Nevis	42	261	6260
St. Lucia	138	616	3510
St. Vincent & Grenadines	110	388	2420

Source: Adapted from World Bank, 1995

The GNP per head ranges from Antigua and Barbuda (US\$7380), which is three times that of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (US\$2420).

With the exception of Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands, which chose to remain colonies, all the other OECS are independent states. There are also religious differences. While the Leeward Islands are mainly Protestant of the Anglican, Methodist and Moravian faiths, the Windward Islands are mainly Roman Catholic. A Creole language is spoken in all the islands as the mother tongue. While the Creole is based on English in most of the islands, in St. Lucia and Dominica it is based on French.

#### **4.3.2 The Impact of Scale**

Small size and insularity together limit the availability of natural resources. Many island states are of volcanic origin, which also means that they are unlikely to have minerals of any importance. In the Caribbean, Jamaica and Guyana have huge deposits of bauxite and Trinidad has oil. However, Guyana is a continental country, while Jamaica is not classified as small state. Trinidad is geologically part of the continent of South America.

Although these island states do not suffer from severe droughts, water is often a problem. Some OECS states have no permanent sources of water such as lakes, streams and rivers and rely on desalination plants. Even in the larger of the small islands, there may be seasons when they experience water shortages.

Another feature of small states in the OECS is the concentration of industry. Their limited natural resource base forces them to concentrate on a few economic sectors with high industrial concentration and specialisation. In the OECS, these sectors are mainly agricultural production of sugarcane and bananas and tourist services.

The industries are also confined to the export sector, with the consequent effect of reliance on high levels of imported goods for domestic consumption.

Some OECS states have not so much diversified their economies as concentrating on different sectors. Some of the Leeward Islands<sup>9</sup> have all, but abandoned agricultural

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<sup>8</sup> Anguilla, Tortola, Virgin Gorda

<sup>9</sup> The Leeward Islands are Antigua & Barbuda, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis and British Virgin Islands.

activities and concentrated on a service economy based on tourism, which now forms the economic mainstay of Antigua, St. Kitts and the Virgin Islands. The move from agriculture was because cultivation of the traditional agricultural exports staples of sugar and cotton ceased to be competitive.

In education, the effect of scale can be seen particularly in the organisation of ministries of education, giving rise to the phenomenon of the multi-functional administrator, where officials hold several portfolios and the combination of several functions under one ministry.

Scale also impacts significantly on the potential efficiency of the administration. As Bacchus (19087) noted:

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*economies of scale. (Bacchus, 1987:3.)*

Scale, seen as a limiting factor in education provision was considered earlier. That OECS does not have a university or even campuses of the University of the West Indies is a limiting factor. However, community colleges are providing sub degree level technical and vocational provision. Some are offering up to the first two years' of UWI degrees, with St. Lucia offering a full degree in Educational Administration.

#### **4.3.3 Proneness to Natural Disasters**

This feature is particularly relevant to Caribbean, although it is due in the main to geology and geography and not scale. Blackman (1991) noted that tropical cyclones and volcanoes had caused the greatest damage to small island states. He cited the many hurricanes that had devastated the banana industry in St. Lucia and Dominica, the evacuation of people from St. Vincent when the Mt. Soufriere threatened to erupt in 1976. The recent eruptions of the volcano in Montserrat in 1996 can now be added to the list. In 1996 hurricane Mitch caused severe devastation in the Caribbean and Central America.

These natural disasters affect other countries and large states alike. However, the important point, as Blackman (1991) noted, was that their effects were more pronounced in small states. In 1979 hurricane David destroyed 80% of the housing stock in Dominica and in 1980, a cyclone caused damage estimated at 89% of GNP. This meant that these states had to start rebuilding their economies all over. These events impact directly on the resources available for education.

#### **4.3.4 Isolation**

This may seem, on the surface, an odd or even contradictory feature of small states, as smallness tends to suggest easier access and travel. Isolation as it pertains to small states has been explored by Brock (1984). The essential aspects of isolation are generally considered in terms of distance, infrastructure and distribution of services.

Spatial isolation is not an issue or at least not a problematic one in the OECS, although the cost of sea and air travel can be quite high. The very existence of the OECS and its role in formulating economic and educational development strategies enhances communication, contact and sharing of policy and practice within the region. Initiatives such as the University of the West Indies Distance Teaching Experiment (UWIDTE) have done much to overcome isolation.

The isolation in the OECS could perhaps be seen in terms academic isolation in that the academic community in the region is small and access to academic developments may sometimes be difficult. However, advances in technological communication including travel render access progressively easier.

There is some internal isolation in OECS states like St. Lucia and Dominica. Their mountainous and rugged interiors mean that some rural communities remain relatively isolated from the main centres, but communication infrastructure and services are now being brought to previously isolated and inaccessible areas. These islands also show some isolation in terms of a rural urban divide, precipitated by language. While everyone

speaks French patios, the official language of education and commerce is English, which is not spoken by many rural dwellers, especially the older ones. Consequently, many rural children are seriously disadvantaged when they start school, because they are taught in English, which is virtually a foreign language to them.

#### **4.3.5 Dependence**

It was shown earlier that there was disagreement as to whether the education system in Latin America was dependent (Olivera, 1985). This section focuses on 3 areas to demonstrate the existence of educational dependence: Curriculum, Management and Pedagogy.

In describing the nature of dependency dimension in Maltese education, Farrugia (1991) concluded that

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*produced. (Farrugia, 1991:592)*

Those who have experience of education in small states will also concur with Fergus' (1993) conclusion:

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*acceptable and legitimate knowledge. (Fergus, 1993:175)*

This could describe the situation in any of the small states in the Caribbean. The education system in small island states is characterised by a high level of dependence.

The school system is based on a British model of education imposed in the nineteenth century, perpetuated under colonialism and remains intact even after independence.

Much of the assistance given to countries in a dependency situation is based largely on the donors' perceptions of the needs of the recipients. Some of this assistance is conditioned on recipients meeting or undertaking measures to achieve other economic, social and political objectives. Much of the assistance is provided as goods and services not cash and, on the occasions that cash is provided its use is invariably tied to purchasing goods and services from the donor country, which is hardly ever the best value for money.

Cultural dependency is also very prominent in small island states. Bishop & Searle (1981) aptly described one of its various manifestations in pre-Revolutionary Grenada.

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*and the people. (Cited in Brock & Smawfield, 1988:236).*

The OECS rely quite heavily on foreign aid/assistance for most of its capital projects and major educational development programmes. A list of the donor nations and the bilateral and multilateral arrangements will confirm the extent of foreign involvement in education in the small island states.

Dependency is still very strong in small island states. While most of the dependence is on the old metropolitan powers, North American culture and values are beginning to gain ground and is now in the ascendancy, shifting the locus of influence from the United Kingdom to North America. This is due to several factors. The explosion of satellite television in the small island states is a big factor. It is usually the dominant source of entertainment, exposing Caribbean people to American wealth and lifestyles, generating local appetite for North American lifestyles. Large scale emigration to the United States, including its Caribbean possessions (United States Virgin Islands), is now resulting in

frequent 'home visits' by those who have are invariably marked by conspicuous consumption and exaggerated accounts of life in the USA in general and their own in particular, spurring a desire among locals for American lifestyles.

There is now frequent tourist travel from the Caribbean to Europe and North America, creating an appetite for western culture and lifestyle. It is quite common for someone who visits the US, whatever the duration of their sojourn, which can be just weeks or days to try to put on an "American accent". This cultural domination is making inroads into what has been the favourite sport in the Caribbean: cricket, which is being overtaken by soccer. Basketball is also becoming increasingly popular.

#### **4.3.6 Globalisation**

Globalisation as a phenomenon affects countries in all regions of the world and the OECS is no exception. If anything it is likely to have a greater impact, given their vulnerability.

Marginson (1996) provides a comprehensive description, if not definition of globalisation.

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1999:19.)

This description suggests that the phenomenon is not new, and it is thought that its origins lie in the history of the western world, but that it has had a recent acceleration. It is also thought that it is co-temporal with modernisation and the development of capitalism with recent acceleration. (*Waters, 1995:4*)

As Dale (1999) argues, globalisation does not constitute a new and distinct form of relationship between nation states and the world economy, but that it takes many different



forms. While it has not rendered the nation state obsolete, it has resulted in a reduction in their ability to take independent action.

The effect of globalisation on nation states has been one of the main areas of concern. It is thought to have reduced the sovereignty and weakened the role of the nation state in education (Waters, 1995:125), although there is some disagreement on the extent to which the role of state has been affected.

The key impact of globalisation on education is best seen through the effect on employment worldwide and demand for workers. International competitiveness and productivity depends on the availability and ability to use educated workers to produce quality products, through the new managerial techniques supported by a skilled workforce with the ability to read, analyse and communicate well. The OECS is already struggling to meet its own modest human resource needs and likely to encounter severe problems in producing the highly skilled workers to help compete globally.

Trade liberalisation and the removal of frontiers has made it easier for companies to shift and move production around the world to areas with lower cost and where the supply of labour exists, effectively giving rise to a low wage, low skilled, and vulnerable economy.

Liberalization policies led to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling that the preferential treatment for importation of bananas from the Caribbean into the EU should be abolished. This is presenting the banana producing islands with a massive headache as most rely almost entirely on bananas for export earnings. However, there may be some help from unexpected quarters. The Guardian Newspaper (*Wednesday, 19 January 2000, G2: 2-3*) reported that the giant British supermarket chain Sainsbury's is planning to take over the entire agricultural production of the Windward Islands and convert them into supplying high-quality organic foods, but this may only be an interim and temporary solution.

Globalisation has been blamed for the international spread of drug trafficking and drug abuse and the emergence of a globalised crime industry (Payne, 1996), which is an acute and almost uncontrollable problem in the Caribbean.

Brown and Lauder (1996) summarise the challenges that countries face:

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*financial and communications infrastructure. (Brown & Lauder, 1996:8).*

#### **4.4 Opportunities Presented by Small Scale**

It was shown in the previous chapter that the scope for flexibility and the ability to respond rapidly was often cited as advantages of smallness although hardly any concrete examples have ever been given. The author agrees with this general conclusion and identifies circumstances where this flexibility could be advantageous.

In the 1950s, the Windward Islands<sup>10</sup> had to respond to the reduction in world demand for cane sugar, largely a result of competition from sugar beet from Europe. The economies of the Windward Islands were transformed from sugar cane to banana cultivation in a short time. A larger country would probably not have been able to achieve such a complete transformation of its economy in that time.

Small size presents key advantages when it comes to policy making. Good communications and infrastructure as found in compact states, speed up consultation, decision-making and implementation. In each member state of OECS, it is possible to visit all the schools in just one or two days. People are very accessible and can be brought together very quickly at short notice. For example, during the field research for this study, the author was able to arrange and interview all the top education officials relatively easily, something that would not have been achieved in a large state. Bray & Fergus (1986) captured the essence of the ease of communication and consultation in small island states by quoting an education officer in Montserrat as saying, "*You've only got to stand on the street corner and you soon hear exactly what is wrong*".

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<sup>10</sup> The Windward Islands are Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada.

The very notion of a small island state confers some advantages. As Bray & Fergus noted:

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*attention that they do in fact enjoy. (Bray & Fergus, 1986: 91)*

It is true that small states have been receiving a great deal of international attention relative to their size. One only has to think of the Falklands and Grenada. A few years ago, there was an international row at the United Nations because St. Lucia voted in favour of resumption of whaling, and was accused of 'selling' their vote to the Japanese. It was alleged that St. Lucia had no interest in whaling, could not afford the subscription and therefore, must have had its subscription to the International Whaling Commission paid for by the Japanese in return for a vote to resume whaling.

Smallness also enables a high degree of mobility. The good road and infrastructure makes intra-island, and travel to work relatively easy.

Despite these opportunities afforded by small scale, the threats from international and regional developments, especially globalisation must not and cannot be overlooked, because they are likely to be the decisive factors in determining the direction and type of development that takes place in these small states.

## **4.5 Responses to the Challenges and Opportunities Presented by Small Scale.**

This section outlines the main strategic responses to overcome the constraints of size and reduce dependency.

### **4.5.1 Regional Co-operation**

Given that the absence of economies of scale has been identified as a major disadvantage of small size, the response at the regional level has been to pool resources and work

collaboratively to take advantage of possible synergy and overcome dis-economies of scale. There are several examples of this type of collaboration in the Caribbean with the University of the West Indies, Caribbean Examinations Council, the Caribbean Common Market and the OECS itself being notable examples.

However, regional co-operation can be fragile and fractious. The defunct West Indies Federation (1958-1961) is a reminder to all of the problems of integration in the region. Guyana was an original member of the University of the West Indies, but left it in 1962 and founded its own University of Guyana. The non-campus states of the University of the West Indies have been complaining that they are badly served by the University and are pushing for reforms. The economic and political differences even among OECS remain sources of great tension that can impede co-operation.

The relative proximity of the OECS states makes co-operation somewhat easier, compared to small states such as the Maldives in the Indian Ocean isolated from other small states.

Moves towards deeper integration and co-operation are consistent with international trends as countries try to strengthen their position whether it is by pooling resources or forming trading blocs to enable them to compete internationally. When strong economies such as those of Western Europe, North America and the Tiger economies seek to co-operate to strengthen their competitive advantages, the signal is clearly that enlargement is the way ahead. The small states in the Caribbean may have no other choice but to seek to maximise any competitive advantages that they may have through greater collaboration, partnership and eventual integration.

#### **4.5.2 Local Capacity Building: Tertiary Education**

The demographic and resource constraints in small states mean that they cannot afford to maintain adequate provision of tertiary education locally. Most small states have found it more convenient to send their nationals overseas for training. However, in recent years, small states have been responding to this challenge by establishing multi-level national

institutions. (Table 3) These institutions focus in the main on sub-degree level validated by the University of the West Indies.

The response to this problem has been to train local staff by offering scholarships and bursaries. Principals have been targeted for training in recognition of the influential role that they can play in improving school performance.

Supplementing local capacity with overseas consultants, who are either employed directly or through bilateral technical assistance is quite commonplace.

**Table 3. Multi-Level, Multi-Faceted Tertiary Institutions in Small states**

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*Source: Commonwealth Secretariat: 1988:*

## **4.6 Issues of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Education**

This section examines the meaning of efficiency and effectiveness in education as they pertain to education in the region.

### **4.6.1 Efficiency in Education**

Efficiency has its root in the neo-classical concept of economic efficiency. In this context, efficiency is used to describe the relationship between a set of inputs and outputs. This utilises the economic concept of production utility for analysing the education process. This process regards education as a production function combining inputs to produce outputs. These are detailed in Levin, 1976; Pscharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985; Lockheed and Hanushek 1988, which contain fuller and technical discussions.

Efficiency is the ability to maximise output for a given level of expenditure or achieving a given level of output with the lowest expenditure. In education, it could mean the largest number of pupils for a given cost or the cheapest way of educating a given number of students. At its simplest, it is the relative cheapness of providing the service and the ease of administration.

Efficiency is generally viewed from the perspectives of internal and external efficiency. Internal efficiency refers to the relationship between inputs and output of the education system, and generally perceived as to cost effectiveness of education and is the concept that is generally associated with efficiency.

External efficiency is generally concerned with how expenditure on education compares with expenditure on other services. The comparison is regarded in terms of benefits to be derived from the alternative use of resources. This concept can be quite useful in providing guidance on the allocation of expenditure between different educational activities and across education sectors. Some commonly used efficiency indicators include, enrolment rates, drop out rates, unit costs, staff student ratios and completion rates.

There is increasing interest in measuring the external efficiency of the educational system, not least, because the system will be judged by measures such as how well the school has done and the extent to which a country's human resource needs are met.

According to Windham (1988), indicators of efficiency are needed to ascertain the current status of educational activity, establish future goals, benchmarks for defining performance and progress towards better utilisation of resources by the education system and institutions.

The research studies on educational efficiency in the Caribbean, Miller (1992), World Bank (1993) and Carrington (1980) used indices such as attendance, enrolment, dropout rates, completion rates, and the general internal efficiency as performance measures. This study relies on these indices, not least, because data is available for them and they are quantifiable.

However, there are complexities in the use of this concept. As Psacharopoulos & Woodhall (1985) noted

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1985:205).

In the OECS, the general picture is that nearly all children are enrolled in primary school and most of them complete school to the specified ages. All but a few primary children are promoted to the next grade automatically, resulting in very low repetition rates.

It is interesting to note that cost measures are not generally used as measures of the efficiency of the system.

#### **4.6.2 Effectiveness in Education**

Effectiveness generally refers to the extent to which specified purposes are served or predetermined objectives achieved. The effectiveness of the education system would be

the extent to which educational objectives were realised. (For a fuller discussion, see Levin, Glass & Meister, 1984). An objective of the educational system could be to provide access to secondary education for the entire age cohort. If it is achieved, then the education system could be said to be effective; but this could have been achieved at a relatively high cost, in which case it may not have been efficient.

Effectiveness is also considered in terms of internal and external effectiveness. Internal effectiveness is the more common concept and generally refers to the measurement of outcomes in terms of educational values such as test scores and performance in examinations. External effectiveness on the other hand, compares non-monetary inputs and monetary outputs. This would refer to such matters as the earnings of graduates taking different courses.

Measuring the effectiveness of the education is problematic and even the purpose of education is a contentious matter. There is no consensus on what education should be trying to achieve or the evidence will be accepted to show that specific learning outcomes have been achieved, or how much time is required to achieve the learning outcomes.

The commonly used indicators of effectiveness in the Caribbean include levels of functional literacy and numeracy, especially at the pre secondary level and attainments in examinations. (Miller, 1991; World Bank, 1993).

In the OECS, there are no standard or systematic measures of performance and attainment at the primary level, which makes both measurement and comparisons problematic. The level of functional literacy is sometimes used to measure the effectiveness of the system. Some states use different assessment methods to test cognitive attainments at the end of the primary school cycle. St. Kitts and Nevis use standard tests to assess attainment in the top two grades in primary school. The British Virgin Islands use a form of criterion referencing to test the mastery of skills and knowledge taught in the primary school and Montserrat uses a set of locally devised



tests.

However, the main measure of effectiveness of the education system in the OECS is performance in examinations. At the primary level, it is the Common Entrance Examination and at secondary level, CXC examinations.

#### **4.7 Development Imperatives**

The OECS as a grouping of small states is emerging as a very influential institution in shaping the development policies of its member states, especially in education.

The economies are small, open and heavily dependent and vulnerable to the decisions of multinational companies to find cheap labour. They rely mainly on exports of one or two services, with tourism becoming an increasingly important sector. The development strategy has been to expand traditional sectors with some diversification into light manufacturing and the "screwdriver" industries in particular. This leaves them very vulnerable to external forces and unable to absorb any external shocks and turbulence.

Increasingly, wealth creation relies on human resource and technology and less on an abundance of capital. Therefore, small states wishing to compete globally must necessarily address these issues. Success and survival even will depend on the ability to take advantage of, and lock into these global networks.

A major challenge for the education system is to produce the personnel required to take advantage of these international developments. This would require an expansion and improvement in the quality of education at all levels.

Migration is an important factor and there is much talk about the "brain drain" from the region. Research undertaken by Simmons & Plaza (1991) shows that people from the OECS emigrating to North America were better educated than the average person in their homeland. Emigration from the region in the 1960s and 1970s was estimated at 15% and 14% respectively and projected at 20% for the 1980s.

Political integration may be an inevitable consequence of international developments. There is much fragmentation in the region and countries have been following their own national agenda with little co-ordination. There seems to be little recognition, or the desire to systematically share information, co-ordinate efforts and assess outcomes in respect of regional initiatives (Miller, 1999), despite their resource limitations.

One of greatest challenges facing the region is globalisation. The emergence of global developments especially in areas such as information and communications technology, the role of multi-national companies (MNCs) and financial markets pose particular challenges. One of the consequences of globalisation has been the erosion of the power of the nation state to take independent action. Countries have to open their economies to the outside world in terms of key areas such as monetary policy, internal markets and trade to remain or become competitive. For the OECS, this means a reduction in the ability to take independent action to tackle priorities such combating issues such poverty, social exclusion, unemployment and improvements to education and health.

#### **4.8. Conclusions**

Most of the studies on education in small states have focused on the impact of scale on education developments. The range of diversity among the small states of the world, raise questions about the advisability and usefulness of grouping them together. The studies that have been most useful are those that have focused on clusters or groupings of small states such as the Caribbean, OECS or the Pacific. There are further questions about whether this all-inclusive grouping serves any useful purpose for development.

As a grouping of small states, the OECS display several features: smallness, isolation and dependence that have implications for development. Isolation as a factor does not appear to be problematic in development, but the consequences of dependence and scale have implications for development. However, some of the consequences associated with both scale and dependency, are also present in large states but more acute in small states. Some of these effects could also be attributed to the lack of resources and not scale per se.

Dependence poses a particularly intractable problem for small states. They are likely to be reliant on external sources of assistance indefinitely and as long as they do, donor countries will continue to exert influence on policy. Even if a new relationship and understanding were reached between small states and donor countries, critical influence would continue through the processes of globalisation, which would also undermine local policy. In addition, neither can they afford to be insular and cut off from the international economic revolution.

Globalisation looms large. It is beginning to impact dramatically and radically on the economies of the banana producing islands, which will in turn affect the entire educational system.

Education remains one of the major developmental challenges for small states like the OECS. They have the major task of developing their economies to enable them to have an education system capable producing the skills needed to sustain their societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

*The emancipation of slaves offered the first opportunity to provide schooling for the masses of the people. (Gordon, 1963)*

## CHAPTER 5

### The Development of Education in the Caribbean

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an historical account of the development of education in the Caribbean, with particular emphasis on the development of mass education in the English speaking countries, all of which experienced similar patterns of educational development.

The chapter starts with an overview and socio-economic and political backgrounds to provide the regional context. This is followed by an historical account of the development of education from pre-emancipation to the post independence era, focusing on the factors and forces that influenced developments in education.

#### 5.2 An Overview of the Caribbean

The development of education in the Caribbean is linked to the history of the region. Therefore, to understand how the education system developed and appreciate the particular influences that shaped it requires an understanding of the history of the region. This is particularly important in the context of comparative education. As Kandel (1993) argued:

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(Kandel,  
1933:XLX)

The countries of the Caribbean lie in an arch in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea stretching from the South of Florida to the mouth of the Orinoca River on the northern tip of South America. Fig. 2. The region is much more diverse and complex than is generally realised. The countries vary in terms of size, population, wealth, ethnic composition,

language and geography.

Differences in size vary from Cuba with a landmass of 110,861 square kilometres and a population of ten and a half million inhabitants, to a small island like Montserrat with an area of 103 square kilometres and a population of approximately 12,000 inhabitants. While St. Lucia is just 20 miles from St. Vincent, it is over 1000 miles from Jamaica, which in turn is nearly 2,000 miles from Trinidad & Tobago.

The topography varies from countries such as Cuba, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Guyana with mountainous interiors, rain forests, rivers and fertile valleys, to countries such as the Bahamas, Antigua and Barbados that are very flat, quite arid, with no forests and hardly any rivers. While most Caribbean countries are islands, Belize is located on the Central American continent between Nicaragua and Guatemala. Guyana is on the South American mainland with Surinam and Venezuela as neighbours. Most of the countries are single or two-island states, but the Bahamas consist of more than 700 islands (not all inhabited).

Several languages and dialects spoken in the region reflect the European influence and the particularly turbulent and savage history of the region. Spanish, English, French and Dutch are official languages in the region.

The ethnic composition of the populations is also very diverse. The people of the English speaking Caribbean are predominantly of African stock with substantial numbers of east Indians in several countries, especially in Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago where they make about half the population. There are also sizeable indigenous Amerindian and Mayan populations in several countries.

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**Figure 2. Map of the Caribbean**

This common history has shaped all aspects of Caribbean life. In the colonial period, there was a certain amount of uniformity in policy implementation. Colonial administrative policies generally applied to all the colonies. It is therefore no surprise that the education systems in all the former British colonies were similar. As Figueroa (1971) remarked:

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*British influence. (Figueroa, 1971:7)*

The economies of the region have emerged from a plantation economy based on the production of sugar with slave labour to one that is fairly diversified, although the production of sugar remains an important economic activity in the larger countries: Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana. Barbados is the only small state still cultivating sugar on a commercial basis.

The Caribbean falls in the middle to low income country category, with wide variations between the levels of income. In 1993, the Gross National Product per capita (1993) ranged from US\$6540 in Antigua a mere US\$370 in Guyana. There are also wide differences in the level of development as measured by the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI varies from Barbados with 0.906 to Guyana with 0.633.

### **5.3 Slavery in the Caribbean**

When the Spanish under Christopher Columbus landed in the Caribbean in 1492, they pillaged, plundered and returned the booty to Spain. They dominated the Caribbean for almost one hundred years, until envy and the rise of other European naval powers challenged their domination.

The Europeans enslaved the indigenous inhabitants to extract precious metals and work on the land, which led to their eventual extermination. There are virtually no indigenous inhabitants left in the Caribbean today.

After the Europeans failed to establish a slave society among the Amerindian, they turned to Africa as a source of labour, which was to mark the beginning of a brutal trade in humans. This resulted in the transportation of an estimated 20 million Africans as slaves, with an estimated five million to the Caribbean.

The slave trade in the British territories was abolished in 1807, and the slaves eventually freed in 1834. However, it continued in the other territories where it was abolished much later: France in 1848, Holland 1863 and North America 1869, after the Civil War.

#### **5.4 The Abolition of Slavery**

Williams (1969), the Caribbean historian and politician identified economic, political, humanitarian, social, international and inter-colonial factors as leading to the abolition of slavery. He argued that abolition was not due solely to humanitarian action as is often portrayed, but was the result of a combination of these factors. These included the declining importance of the British territories in the Caribbean to the metropolitan economy because of declining production of sugar, with many of the plantations saddled with debt and the economies on the verge of ruin. It was also part of the industrial struggle against the landed aristocracy and the general movement of the proletariat towards industrial democracy in Europe. The humanitarian efforts of the abolitionists in campaigning against slavery contributed to raising public awareness of the evils of slavery, was winning public support and sympathy, with inter-colonial rivalry also playing a part in abolition.

The significance of the internal struggles to the abolition of slavery is an area that has been neglected or played down. The Africans, who were forcibly transported to the Caribbean as slaves, never accepted their enslavement and did much to try to overthrow the cruel system. There are many accounts of plots to kill slave masters and assume control going back to as early 1640 (C.L.R. James, 1938).



There were constant rebellions on the plantations during which slaves burnt down plantations, pillaged, looted and killed many planters and their families. Many slaves also ran away to live in the mountainous interiors. These runaways (maroons) became a constant thorn in the side of the Imperial powers, resulting in numerous clashes between the military and the maroons. The insurrection that started in Guyana in 1823 was probably a decisive factor in the struggle for freedom.

## 5.5 Education in the pre-Emancipation Period

There were no schools in the pre-emancipation period because most planters in the Caribbean sent their children to school in Europe. What local provision existed in the early years was provided by the missionaries, for the sons of white plantation workers and other whites who could not afford to send their children abroad to be educated.

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their condition and rebel against it. As Dalton (1855) documented.

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*Bacchus, 1990a)*

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This seemed part of the controlling mechanisms to keep the slaves in perpetual ignorance. Africans were thought to be inferior to whites and incapable of learning beyond how to carry out simple tasks.

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*rather hang themselves or run away than submit it. (Cited in Bridenbaugh 1972).*

Stewart (1823) provided further evidence of this early racist attitude:

*(Cited in Bacchus, 1990a)*

The missionaries who were active in the region had been trying to persuade the planters to allow slaves to be taught to read and write. Where such permission was granted, the teaching was confined solely to religious aspects of education that inculcated into the slaves, those values and attitudes that ensured subservience and accepting their lot in society. In their zeal to convert the slaves, and concern not to upset the planters and the local legislatures, the missionary bodies had, intentionally or unintentionally, conspired with the ruling classes to give slavery religious legitimacy. It should be remembered that the objective of the missionaries was to convert the slaves and they probably perceived the ability to read and write as a way of speeding up the process of conversion. Moreover, the missionaries did not as a rule object to slavery since many of them owned slaves.

However, the attitude of the planters to slaves being educated began to change at the dawn of emancipation. The planters began to realise that a new society had to be built and felt that education of the right type could sustain that society with them retaining their dominant position. Further, the British Government was of the view that education, and especially religious education, was essential to ensure the success of emancipation and provided financial support for education

## 5.6 Education in the Post-Emancipation Period

As Professor Shirley Gordon, the distinguished, and one of the earliest writers on education in the Caribbean noted:

*Until Emancipation Day in 1834, there was no question of an education system to secure education. (Gordon, 1968a: 32)*

The efforts of the missionaries to provide education for the slaves, albeit limited and restricted to religious education had certainly whetted the appetite of the masses for education.

The idea that religious education should form the core of any education for the ex-slaves pervaded the education provided in the post emancipation period.

The Sterling Report<sup>11</sup> had concluded:

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*(as labourers) in a civilised community. (Sterling Report, 1836)*

Sterling had gone even further to suggest that, spiritual cultivation through religious instruction and reading should be the main concern of any educational programme in the schools of the region, and that writing was of little value to the masses.

The new social order in the Caribbean was to be laid by education that aimed to develop morality underpinned by religious education. However, many of the denominations insisted that reading was an important part of Christian education and that the ability to read would enable people to learn by their own efforts. The religious dimension to education with its roots in the missionary work during slavery continues to underpin education today, with the curriculum reflecting very strong religious and spiritual elements and church continuing to play a powerful role in the control of education.

Education in the post emancipation period was influenced by a number of developments. Three of the developments that impacted significantly on education are examined here: the Apprenticeship System, the Negro Education Grant and the Mico Charity.

### **5.6.1 The Apprenticeship System**

A system of apprenticeship came into force after Emancipation in 1834. It was to last for four years until 1838. Under the system, all those over six years old were to serve an apprenticeship. Those over six years old who wanted an education had to attend night or Sunday schools. Therefore, it was not until the end of the apprenticeship scheme in 1838 that the masses could participate in education.

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<sup>11</sup> Report commissioned by the Colonial Government to into the best ways of controlling and providing education in the colonies, after Emancipation.

The Apprenticeship System appeared to be no more than an attempt to help the planters continue reaping the benefits of cheap labour and coerce the ex-slaves to continue working on the plantations. It had become clear to the planters that once the apprenticeship period was over, many ex-slaves would not remain on the plantations on which they had been forcibly held and made to labour, even as paid workers.

The Apprenticeship System was problematic. The magistrates appointed to hear complaints and settle disputes could not cope with the sheer volume of cases, as many ex-slaves plainly refused to continue working on the estates. Consequently, the Apprenticeship System terminated prematurely in many territories (Marshall, 1971).

The failure of the Apprenticeship System and the refusal of many ex slaves to continue working on the plantations, led to two significant developments that would shape the development of the new society. The shortage of labourers after Emancipation led to the importation of large numbers of labourers, many indentured from China, India and Europe to work on the sugar plantations; their arrival causing major changes to the racial composition and cultural patterns of the society. The second development was the rise of Caribbean peasantry. The peasantry developed because of ex-slaves moving away from the plantations to cultivate small plots of cash crops on the Crown Lands, which was in abundance. Others drifted into the towns to work as artisans, craftsmen and shopkeepers. However, the peasant form of production became established as the main form of production and livelihood for most of the ex-slaves.

#### **5.6.2 The Mico Charity**

The Mico Charity and the missionary societies played significant roles in the provision of education in the period after Emancipation. The charity was set up with monies left by Dame Jane Mico because the first benefactor failed to meet the conditions for the inheritance.

The Charity began work soon after Emancipation and opened its first school in 1835, when the first batch of teachers left England for Jamaica. By 1841, it operated 86 schools and had extended its activities to nearly all the English-speaking territories. They operated primary schools, secondary schools, infant schools and teacher training colleges. They became the largest trainers of trained teachers in the region. They also established a number of evening schools for those adults who worked during the day.

The charity was also involved in the establishment of infant schools, which it considered very important for personal development. The prevailing philosophy of the charity was that the environment in which children were being brought up should be conducive to their moral development and that it was important to start at an early stage.

The Mico Charity faced hostilities from the planters and missionaries in the early period of their operation. The planters felt that the work of Mico was a continuation of the Imperial domination of the affairs of the colonies. Moreover, they had never favoured educating the slaves. The missionaries also resented the Mico teachers because they saw them as encroaching in an area, which they thought was their prerogative. Moreover, they felt that the lack of religious instructions in the secular Mico schools would do much to undermine the moral development of children.

The expansion of schools continued very rapidly through the efforts of the Mico Charity and the Missionary Societies, with occasional assistance from the government. Their activities began to decline after the withdrawal of the Negro Education Grant in 1845.

### **5.6.3 The Negro Education Grant**

The Negro Education Grant was established under the Emancipation Act of 1834 to provide education for the ex-slaves. A sum of £30,000 was paid annually until 1845. The grant was distributed mainly to the missionary societies for building new schools and from 1837 for paying teachers. The grant helped to build many new schools in the region. Some 38 schools were built in 1834 and another 52 in 1836.

The withdrawal of the grant in 1845 had disastrous effects on education in the entire region. The withdrawal of the grant happened at a time when the church and missionary societies were also in decline because they could not continue to meet the increasing costs of their educational activities. It was hoped that the local legislatures would meet the shortfall arising from the withdrawal of the grant, but they were very reluctant to do so. Consequently, many schools closed and some of the surviving ones resorted to measures such as charging fees, reducing teacher salaries and curtailing the number of subjects taught, which led to decline in attendance.

These early initiatives although important in the development of education were not sustainable, causing much of their impact to be lost. This has been a feature of developments in the region, which has certainly retarded the development of education. A major reason for the lack of sustainability of these early attempts at education was that in those days, school was not regarded as a public service to be provided for by the state.

### **5.7. The Development of Secondary and Tertiary Education**

Although the thrust of early education in the post emancipation period had been with the expansion of elementary or primary education, there were also some early attempts to establish both secondary and post-secondary education provision in the region.

Sterling Report of 1836 first proposed secondary schools, and the first was set up in the middle of the 19th Century.

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*Report, 1835)*

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The planters and elite were generally opposed to government funds for secondary schools. A major reason was that the affluent sent their children to Europe and was not prepared to finance an education provision that they did not use. This was not surprising because they were in the main adventurers and investors seeking a quick profit to return to England. However, there were increasing pressures from an emerging middle class for popular secondary education and the governments were forced to provide financial support.

Two types of secondary education developed, each with its own curriculum and purpose. There was the grammar-type secondary school for the children of the planters and elite, providing a classical curriculum like the grammar school in Britain. These schools prepared young people for university and middle ranking white-collar jobs. The other form of secondary education, or rather, a form of 'advanced primary' school prepared young people for lower echelon white-collar jobs and teaching. This set the pattern and dichotomy that subsequently developed in secondary education and still typifies secondary education in the Caribbean.

The nature of the secondary school curriculum and the purpose of secondary education became an issue of intense political debate. The issue was whether secondary education should be an instrument of social reproduction of the ruling classes in the society or whether it should provide opportunities for social mobility. While the former view seemed to have prevailed, it was also accepted that secondary education should also permit some level of social mobility.

Note the speech by the Attorney General of Trinidad (1857):

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...red, and what is the  
...answer is, that the  
...classical education  
...the same objects, and  
...ation which is given  
...poses an early and  
(Trinidad, Attorney

*General's Speech, 1857)*

The secondary school provision came under heavy criticism for its classical nature and there were calls to broaden the curriculum to include science and commercial subjects. However, despite criticisms and calls for change, the classics continued to dominate the curriculum of grammar schools. Given that grammar schools were largely geared to preparing students for entering UK universities, external assessment and certification became major issues and the content of the secondary school curriculum became the same as UK grammar school.

That teachers came from England was a major factor in reinforcing the classics. Most of them had been educated in the classics and saw it as a fitting curriculum, not least, because it reflected their own, and often, only experiences of education. Moreover, the two most important components of the system: the curriculum and teachers were both imported, and with the support of senior civil servants who were themselves, products of the same system. It should therefore, not be surprising that the English public school system was established in the region. The aim was to ensure that the standard of secondary education in the Caribbean compared favourably, in every respect with secondary education in Britain.

When the Local Cambridge Examinations were introduced, they became the passports to respectable employment, and schools concentrated on preparing students for these examinations. The late C.L.R James (1901-1989), arguably the most famous Caribbean scholar and political thinker described his secondary school curriculum in Trinidad as follows:

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*English History, Ancient and Modern European History. (C.L.R James, 1963:37).*



## 5.8 Teachers in the Post-Emancipation Period.

Until the Marriott Mayhew report of 1933, which suggested that financial restraint was the major cause of the poor education; teachers had been invariably blamed for the poor state of education in the region.

In 1869 Keenan<sup>12</sup> had reported on what he considered "bad schoolmastership":

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*(Keenan Report, 1869)*

The increasing demand for education in the post-emancipation era, due largely to the Negro Education Grant and the activities of the Mico Charity, resulted in a serious shortage of teachers. There were not enough people from England willing to go to the Caribbean as teachers. Even the few who were prepared to go became very costly, which the missionary societies could no longer afford. Many of those who went from England (the main source of teachers then) were thought to be of poor quality and unsuitable. As Sterling noted:

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*(Sterling Report, 1835).*

The problem of teacher shortage was tackled by resorting to the recruitment of local whites and mixed race. This met with little success, as many of those who expressed an interest in teaching were unsuitable on either academic/and or moral grounds. Former slaves were recruited later, only as a very last resort.

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<sup>12</sup> The Keenan Report was commissioned by the British Government to advise on the system of secular education that had been established in Trinidad

Teacher-shortages in Trinidad were noted as early as 1846.

*The extreme difficulty, which the island faced in getting proper persons to be schoolmasters and noted that bringing them from England was out of the question, for besides their large salaries, most persons of European birth are unable from the effects of the climate to perform their duties with regularity. (Government of Great Britain, 1846)*

The social stratification based on race and colour that became a feature of society in the Caribbean was also reflected among the teachers. At the top of the hierarchy were the white teachers who came from Europe. Below them were the local whites, followed by mixed-race and the blacks that were on the bottom of the social ladder. Salaries were decided to a significant extent by the position on the social ladder. Whites from Europe were paid most with the blacks being paid the least.

In spite of the poor salaries, low status, and high moral standards expected of teachers, teaching still attracted many candidates, because of the lack of alternative employment. Most became teachers because they had failed in other occupations. Many who started as teachers moved away into better-paid occupations. Young women were recruited into teaching in the hope that they would remain because of the absence of alternative employment. Teaching was therefore, regarded as an extremely low status and thankless occupation in the Caribbean as noted by Campbell (1963).

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1963).

The various attempts to recruit teachers locally, still fell short of producing teachers in the required numbers and quality. Many of those recruited locally were only part-

time teachers who taught as a means of supplementing their income.

It should therefore not be surprising that the quality of this "motley crew" of teachers was very poor. The poor quality of those who were attracted to teaching was also a function of their extremely poor salaries and status in society. The quality of the resulting teaching force was such that anyone who was literate and numerate could teach.

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*(Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, 1839, Cited in Bachus, 1985).*

The problems with securing appropriate supply of teachers provide further evidence of the difficulties and struggles encountered in establishing a school system in the region. While the problems were exacerbated by the lack of planning and co-ordination of school provision, establishing an effective education system in these circumstances would have been very challenging, even in modern times.

## **5.9 Teacher Training**

The earliest attempts at teacher training consisted of missionaries taking promising pupils under their tutelage and providing additional lessons after school.

With the help of the Negro Education Grant, the various missionary societies and the Mico Charity set up teacher training colleges in Jamaica, Antigua, Guyana (then British Guiana) and Trinidad.

Although the religious bodies ran these training colleges, they trained teachers to teach in all schools. However, alongside the training colleges, some religious bodies also ran Normal Schools. These Normal Schools took the brightest children and provided additional training to enable them to become teachers in the

denominational schools.

The entry requirements of the Mico Normal School were very modest. Candidates were only expected:

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1991)

The withdrawal of the Negro Education Grant led to the closure of most teacher training colleges. The local legislatures, who were already providing financial support for secondary education, were reluctant to provide grants for teacher training, which exacerbated an already difficult situation. Teaching was indeed in a very poor state, with untrained and sometimes poorly educated teachers operating under such harsh conditions that would be a challenge, even to a well-trained and experienced teacher.

The attempt to meet the demand for teachers led to the establishment of the "pupil-teacher" system as the main form of teacher recruitment and training in the most of the English-speaking Caribbean.

The system was to operate for well over 150 years in some territories. It was phased out in St. Lucia in the 1980s and is yet to be completely phased out in Belize. Under the system, school leavers who passed their country's School Leaving Examinations were recruited as pupil teachers, some as young as 14 years. They took on a full teaching load, studied in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays, and had to pass a series of examinations before they were deemed to have reached a sufficiently high standard to enter teacher-training college. Although the system has now been phased out, many teachers, especially the older and more experienced ones are products of that system.

Teacher training was always and continues to be a major educational challenge. The system has evolved from one where teachers were barely literate to one in which some islands have fully-trained teaching forces, with substantial proportions being graduates. This is discussed more fully in Section 5.10.3.

## **5.10 20th Century and Post Independence Developments in Education**

This section provides an overview of the major developments in education during the 20th Century focusing on developments in the post-independence period. Three broad developments are considered: primary and secondary education, vocational and tertiary education, teacher education and the management and control of education.

### **5.10.1 Primary & Secondary Education**

Most of the history of education in the region up to the early 20th Century was concerned with the development of primary education, which was well established by the turn of the century. As Miller (1990) noted:

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*accomplished fact in Caribbean societies. (Miller, 1990:66).*

Later developments were a consolidation of the early developments. Therefore, this section will not deliberate on developments in primary education, but instead focuses on secondary education. However, reference will be made to some of the milestones in the development of primary education.

Primary enrolment, which had been steadily increasing, was about 50% at the turn of the century, showed spectacular growth to reach an average of 90% in most Caribbean countries by the 1980s.

In the 1960s, as Caribbean countries became independent, ambitious plans for expanding secondary education in the region were implemented. The focus was on vocational and technical education and several countries opened technical schools and colleges. These were largely the results of the attention that writers gave to the subject, and recommendations by international bodies such as UNESCO and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The 1970s saw further expansion of secondary education by the introduction of the Junior Secondary School in most of the territories - an idea borrowed from North America. These schools provided 4 years of secondary education and upon completion, those passing an entry examination would progress to senior secondary education for another 2 years.

The 1980s saw the continued expansion of secondary education and upgrading of the junior secondary schools to senior secondary status. This period also coincided with a period of curriculum reform, which saw the setting up of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), which gave local control over the curriculum and teaching and assessment strategies for the very first time.

Until recently, the thrust of educational development had been on expansion in terms of quantity and widening access, especially in secondary education. There is now increasing interest in the quality of education.

#### **5.10.2 Vocational and Tertiary Education**

While the territories were struggling to expand elementary education and to a lesser extent secondary education, there were early attempts to establish some form of vocational and technical education in the territories.

There was an attempt to establish a college of higher education in Bermuda as early as 1880. Codrington College in Barbados was established in 1830 and affiliated with

Durham University in Britain in 1875.

The real breakthrough in post secondary education came with the establishment of the University of the West Indies in 1948, as a constituent college of the University of London. The University now has major campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados. It is interesting that the establishment of a University of the West Indies was recommenced in the Keenan Report<sup>13</sup> in 1869. While the University of the West Indies has been successful in providing higher education for the elites in the region, it does not have sufficient capacity to meet local demand. Consequently, many Caribbean nationals still train overseas, mainly in the United Kingdom, North America and Australia. The concentration on degree level programmes at UWI has meant that sub degree and diploma level programmes are at best underdeveloped and at worst neglected. Consequently, the region has experienced a shortage of technicians but paradoxically, an oversupply of graduates especially in the social sciences. There is additional dimension to this in that, the non-campus states, mainly the OECS, feel that their nationals are not being well or equitably served by UWI.

A combination factors, including failure of UWI to meet the skill needs, especially at the technician level, the rising demand for vocational education and the desire to reduce reliance of foreign training led to the strategy of local capacity building. This has led to the establishment of community colleges in the non-campus states (Section 4.6). These community colleges are multi level multi-faceted local institutions providing technical and vocational training and in a few cases run first and second year undergraduate degree programmes of UWI. It may only be a matter of time before a University of the non-campus states or OECS emerges.

It was noted earlier, that the attempts at introducing industrial education schools during the 19th century, were strongly resisted by parents. These parents did not want their children to be turned into estate and manual labourers, which would further disadvantage

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<sup>13</sup>The Keenan Report was commissioned by the British Government to advise on the system of secular education that had been established in Trinidad.

and deny them access to the more prestigious jobs in society.

However, the social and economic problems in the Caribbean led to renewed criticisms of the academic curriculum and attention began to focus on its inappropriateness in meeting the developmental needs of the region. This led Michael Manley, the late prime Minister of Jamaica to argue comprehensively for balance in the curriculum.

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*a radical restructuring of the content of the system. (Manley, 1974:141-142).*

This applied in equal degree to other parts of the Caribbean.

The 1960s saw rapid increases in vocational education in response to the demand for skilled labour by the newly developing enterprises as the region embarked on its industrialisation programmes. This necessitated reforming the curriculum to make it more work-related and relevant to the local needs. Much of this development continued in the 1970s and gained momentum. A focus of these initiatives was to revive interest in and modernise agriculture and farming.

Antigua and Barbuda proposed to expand and upgrade the vocational and technical provision in schools. In 1980, the government of Barbados commissioned a special report to examine the island's technical and vocational educational needs. The publication of the report led to the establishment of a National Training Board to oversee the



development of vocational and technical education. Similar arrangements are in place in several other Caribbean countries. The renewed commitment to vocational education could also be gleaned from the Development Plans and policy statements. The Government of Dominica in a policy statement declared:

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*in the secondary school  
workshop or handicraft  
(Alexander 1984; cited in  
Commonwealth Secretariat, 1988).*

The community and technical colleges in the region now provide most vocational education provision, all of which have some capacity for vocational education. The range of provision now includes, a wide range of commercial and technical subjects such as typing, accounting, business administration, information technology, plumbing, carpentry & woodworking, electricians, nursing and agriculture.

### **5.10.3 Teacher Training**

In the early 20th Century, teacher education facilities existed only in Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and Barbados. There were no such provisions in the grouping now called the OECS except Antigua, but a few teachers were sent to other islands for training. Teacher education provision in the other territories developed much later. For instance, St. Lucia did not have its own teacher training college until 1963.

The idea of forming a Central Training Institute in the Eastern Caribbean was discussed at a meeting of education leaders in Trinidad in 1921. The need for such a facility was echoed in the Marriott Mayhew Report of 1933. Directors of Education discussed the same issue again in 1957.

The racial composition of the participants at these two conferences also marked a significant development in Caribbean education. All delegates attending the 1921 conference were white. In 1957 all but one, was black. This showed the transformation that was taking place in the decision-making and control of education.

Teacher education remains a problem. Not only in terms of the proportion of teachers that are qualified, but also in terms of attracting some of the best candidates to teaching and encouraging them to stay.

The provision for teacher training in the Caribbean is still poorly developed, despite its long history of teacher education. By the mid 1950s, there were few teacher training facilities in Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana and Barbados and it was reported that not a single country had as much as half of its teachers trained (Miller, 1993).

The real push for teacher education began in the 1960s, when governments began to prioritise teacher education as a policy objective. All Caribbean countries except Montserrat and Anguilla now have teacher-training colleges, but there is inter island co-operation in teacher training.

The policy of prioritising teacher education has been very successful in some countries. Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica. Trinidad & Tobago achieved an over 90% trained teaching force in the early 1980s and Barbados in the late 1980s, but performance has been disappointing in the other countries. Table 4.

**Table 4. Proportion of Primary School Teachers Trained, 1984-1990**

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*Source: Miller, 1991.*

In the early days of teacher education, each territory that had teacher training facilities certified their own teacher training programmes, but it was soon realised that there was a need to monitor, develop and conduct research into teacher education. The financial implications and the benefits that could be derived from pooling resources were soon realised. Agreement was reached to allow the University of the West Indies to take responsibility for the development of teacher education including certification, and remains the current situation for all Commonwealth Caribbean countries, except Guyana that certifies its own teacher education programme through the University of Guyana.

Another important development has been the recruitment of better academically qualified people into teaching, especially in countries such as The Windward Islands and Belize that had the pupil-teacher system.

The proportion of trained teachers is only one of several contemporary issues facing teacher education in the region. A report on teacher education in the Caribbean conducted on behalf of the Commonwealth Secretariat (Steward & Thomas, 1996), identified issues of continuing concern in teacher education in the region to include broadly: Philosophical and conceptual issues, organisational and planning issues, curricular issues, teacher control and development and research and evaluation. All are major issues affecting the quality of teacher education in the region.

#### **5.10.4 Curricula Reform**

Perhaps the greatest developments have been in the secondary curriculum. The establishment of the CXC has been the most radical reform, which brought about local control of the curriculum, examinations and assessment in secondary schools. Many of the subjects now relate to the Caribbean context, especially, History, Social Studies, Geography and Economics. However, the role of secondary education is seen as preparing students for the CXC to gain access to higher education, locally and internationally. Thus, the emphasis remains on academic training.

In some countries, there are secondary schools teaching both academic and vocational training, but the exit point remains the same - the terminal CXC examinations.

## **5.11 The Administration of Education in the Colonial Period.**

This section examines the arrangements for the administration and control of education in the Colonial period, with particular emphasis on its organisation and structure.

### **5.11.1 Organisation and Structure**

During the colonial period, education, like other administrative functions was controlled by Britain. Policy was made in Britain and administered in the colonies centrally through a department of education, which was overseen directly by the Colonial Office. The main function of the education department was to implement the policies of the imperial power. This generally involved the allocation of grants to schools and the conduct of school inspections and examinations.

A director of education or school commissioner generally led the Education Department, assisted by school inspectors.

Each school was governed by at least three managers, one of which was a parish priest. When government assisted schools were established, parish boards were formed to advise the schools and their managers. When government schools were established, Boards of Education were formed to oversee schools.

### **5.11.2 The Evolution of Administrative Control**

The inspectors played a critical role in the administration and control of education. This was particularly important under the payments by results system, which meant that, what teachers earned depended on the inspectors' assessment of the performance of the schools.

The first significant attempt at deciding the control of education came because of the Sterling Report in 1835, in which he recommended that the religious bodies be the responsible for providing education for the ex-slaves. The Keenan Report of 1869 reversed this policy and recommended that education should be secular. This was an attempt to limit the influence of what was seen as foreign churches in the region, especially the Roman Catholic Church that was already very influential in Trinidad and the Windward Islands.

When the Mico Charity was given responsibility for secular education, a dual system of education operated in the territories. There were no controls from the centre and all decisions regarding curriculum, textbooks, and setting up new schools, admission and recruitment of teachers were taken by the churches or the Mico Charity.

Under Crown Colony government, the British government took greater direct responsibility for the administration of the colonies and many local groups and bodies were abolished. The administration of education came under the direct control of an appointed governor who was accountable to the Colonial Office. The governor became a very powerful figure in the colonies, and was assisted in his duties by a legislative council nominated by him.

The Boards of Education appointed to advise on education had not been effective and many had stopped operating due to low and non-attendance. This move was probably welcomed by the Colonial administrators, because as Gordon remarked:

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*advisory board. (Gordon, 1963b: 116.)*

However, others wanted boards of education with full powers so that local interests and concerns would be addressed. The inspectors were opposed to the boards of education because they saw them as frustrating their jobs of efficient administration of education.

The criticisms of the education system, which had always been a feature of education since the start of mass education, continued into the 20th Century. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the local legislatures were enacting regulations and laws that were contrary to the policy of the Imperial governments. Consequently, the inspectors were replaced with Directors of Education as the leading education officials in the colonies. The Boards of Education that had been controlling education were abolished or reduced to a supervisory role.

The directors of education became all-powerful officials directly accountable to the governor. This infuriated Caribbean people and was a major source of discontent that led to the industrial troubles in the 1930s. This fuelled local

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*not provided the education required (Gordon, 1963:161).*

This came under further heavy fire in all the regions. The powers of the post of director of education was critically examined in the Trinidad Gazette:

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*Legislative Council. (Port of Spain Gazette, 14 April 1918; cited in Gordon, 1963:162)*

Much of this unhappiness with the control of education was echoed throughout the region. A report on education in Guyana (then British Guiana) criticised education in the colony and claimed that there would be no reform without state control of education, exercised by a strong Education Department under a Commissioner. While this move was prompted by objections to the current arrangements, there was also concern about issues of economy and the need to control and contain the rising cost of education.

As the territories gained internal self-government and eventual independence, these Education Departments were transformed into Ministries with the introduction of Ministerial Government and remains so today, although the trend has been to combine several functions into one Ministry.

### **5.11.3 Social Unrest and Civil Disturbances**

The 1930s were particularly difficult times for the Caribbean but also a significant period in the struggle against colonial rule. The region suffered from the general depression and the subsequent trade slump in Europe and North America. The effects were exacerbated because the local legislatures had not resources to provide relief. Under colonial government, the local legislatures included unofficial elected members, who represented particular interests, but significantly, the labouring and peasant classes were not represented, and felt that their interest and concerns were not being taken into account by the legislatures. Consequently, the workers felt that they were benefiting from the action of the local legislatures.

Dissatisfaction with the state of affairs led to industrial unrest in the region in the form of strikes and riots against low wages and 'Crown Colony' government. Fire was set to the cane fields and the oil fields of Trinidad. Williams (1969), provides a succinct chronology of events in the 1930s.

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*amounted to 29, 115 wounded. (Williams, 1969:473).*

It was these disturbances that led to the appointment of the Moyne Commission in 1939, to investigate the causes of these troubles.

The Moyne Report that followed depicted the appalling conditions under which the masses lived in the crown colonies. The report was critical of Crown Colony government

in the region. It documented the plight of workers on the estates and on smallholdings, the distressing hovels in which many people lived, malnutrition and chronic health problems, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency and the inadequacies of the education.

The main conclusion of the report was that the problems of the region were economic, exacerbated by the depression combined with weak government finances that prevented them from taking remedial action.

The main recommendation was to establish a West Indian Welfare Fund to address these problems. The fund was intended to establish schemes for the improvement in education, health services, slum clearance, provision of social welfare facilities and land settlement.

The establishment of the Welfare Fund was quite significant, because for many of the territories, it became the major, and in some, the only source of public services. This must be seen against a background of recently freed people who had to provide for their own welfare in areas such as housing, medical services and poor relief since the abolition of slavery. Moreover, the local legislatures did not assume responsibility for social services until there was internal self-government in the territories.

With regard to education, the report recommended the provision of more teachers and improvements in teacher training, the construction of more and better schools, improved use of teaching equipment and overhauling of the curricula to make them more relevant to the region, including training in agriculture. It noted that very little from the recommendation of the Marriott Mayhew report of 1935 had had any effect. It also recommended the education of girls in domestic science and the development of adult education.

## **5.12 Modern Developments and Achievements in Education**

Much has been achieved in education in the region since the independence era (approximately 1960 to 1980), on which it continues to build. The period was characterised by the coincidence of social demand, political will, and economic will and economic means directed towards educational development (Miller, 1998: 6). The resulting achievements in education have therefore been very impressive.

The major achievements are highlighted below:



- Universal coverage of primary education in the English speaking Caribbean
- Pre-School education covering up to 80% of the age range
- Mass secondary education in all countries and universal secondary education in many
- Most children with learning difficulties and disabilities have access to specialist provision
- Tertiary level institutions, especially community colleges now established in most states providing wider access to further education
- Secondary examinations are almost wholly localised, with the Caribbean Examinations Council responsible for curriculum, examinations and assessment.
- Schools are staffed almost entirely by nationals of the region, with the majority being teacher-trained and a high proportion being graduate-teachers
- Rapid expansion on non-formal and adult education

These achievements have been driven very much from within in an attempt to address what is perceived as the development needs of the region. Some of these achievements have been achieved through both regional co-operation and the efforts of individual Caribbean states through comprehensive reforms or project driven approaches.

The OECS, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas established task forces or National Commissions to review educational developments and develop strategies. The OECS developed the OECS Education Reform Strategy, which was subsequently adopted by Ministers. Similarly, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas and Barbados accepted many of the recommendations of their respective reviews.

Countries such as Belize, Guyana and Jamaica and the Turks & Caicos Islands adopted a project driven approach to tackle specific issues. Belize, Guyana, Jamaica focused on reform in primary and secondary education. The Turks and Caicos also focused on primary and secondary education and the establishment of a community college.

Some of the specific programmes underpinning these reforms have included attempts to improve the pay and status of teachers, the introduction of information technology in schools (including primary schools) curriculum reform including vocational and technical education and expansion of secondary and tertiary education.

### **5.13. Conclusion: Links Between Contemporary Issues in Education and History.**

The history of education in the Caribbean has shown a constant struggle first to have access to a satisfactory education, an appropriate curriculum and for control education. The missionaries were major players in the field of education and with the Mico Charity made substantial contribution. Bacchus (1990a) assessed the contribution of the missionaries as follows:

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*of the population. (Bacchus, 1990a: 143).*

The post emancipation period has also been a continual struggle. A struggle for self-determination, against oppression and injustice and for access to opportunities for social and economic mobility. These struggles took place in the context of a new and developing society, where those in power, especially former slave owners wanted to maintain their control, power and privilege. The Caribbean is in some ways, a unique modern society. It is the only society that has risen from slavery in which; former slaves and their descendants have risen to be masters of the land.

Colonialism meant that all the important institutions and societal structures in the British Colonies were formulated by Britain and modelled on British institutions. This was because under the colonial system the decisions about education were taken by the Imperial Government and implemented by the colonial administrators.

The education system did not meet the needs of the masses. Primary education was designed to produce the lower clerical echelons of the colonial administration, craftsmen, artisans and plantation workers. The limited secondary education was the preserve of the privileged few, mainly the children of white colonial administrators. Further, not only was there inequality of access to education, but the curriculum was also largely irrelevant, more suited to Britain than the Caribbean. The dominance of academic training in the secondary schools in the region is a direct consequence of the role and purpose of secondary education, which stemmed from its elitist beginning. There was reliance on foreign examinations to ensure that secondary school leavers could enter overseas Universities.

The continued involvement and influence of the church in education reflect the imperial policy to establish secular education in addition to the denominational schools as a means of limiting the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. This strategy was not successful because the Catholic Church is particularly influential in some ex-French territories like Trinidad, St. Lucia, Grenada and Dominica. What this policy succeeded in doing was create confusion and hiatus in the control of education.

The state of teacher education in the region reflects the colonial inheritance. The region has probably never recovered from the shortage of teachers caused by the demand for education after emancipation. Consequently, the region has never had a fully trained teaching force. Solving this problem remains a major challenge.

Political independence has brought some degree of control over education. Governments were now in a position, in theory at least, to pursue policies of their choice to meet their needs. However, realising this has been problematic and continuing dependence and globalisation is undermining efforts.

In the 165 years since slavery ended, the Caribbean has achieved much and laid a solid

foundation in education upon which to build, going into the new millennium, but there is still much to do.

St. Lucia also has its own set of challenges. The issue of state and church controlled education must be resolved to bring coherence and minimise confusion in the management and administration of the education system. The legacy of the dual system of secondary education with its deliberate bias towards academic education needs to be addressed. Securing an adequate supply of appropriately qualified and trained teachers is becoming almost intractable and the problem of curriculum relevance still looms large.

An emerging priority is to transform education from what is essentially a “school system” to embrace a broader concept of education that recognises different learning contexts, structures and content, to deal with the impact of globalisation on educational policy and practice.

*(St. Lucia, Ministry of Education, Development  
Phase Two 1990-1995).*

## CHAPTER 6

### Education in St. Lucia

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of education in St. Lucia and an assessment of the education system.

The chapter starts with an historical overview of St. Lucia and a consideration of the socio-economic and political contexts, followed by an outline of the development of education. The education system is then examined focusing on the school system, teacher education, expenditure on education, performance, administration at ministerial district and school levels. Recent attempts at education reform are highlighted and the main issues summarised in the conclusion.

#### 6.2 An Overview

St. Lucia is a member of the sub regional grouping of Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and part of the group of Windward Islands. It is at latitude 14 degrees North and longitude 61 degrees West. (Figure 3). It is 140 kilometres from Barbados to the east, 32 kilometres from St. Vincent & the Grenadines to the South and 38 Kilometres from Martinique to the North.

ST. LUCIA

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The island is of volcanic origin with a rugged topography, mountainous interior with the land flattening to the north and south. Valleys run from the central ridge of the island. The topography has influenced the location of settlements, most of which are along the coasts.

The island shares a common history of slavery and colonialism along with other Caribbean countries. It has a distinguishing feature in having a particularly strong French influence, a legacy of colonial times, when the island changed hands 14 times between the British and the French, before it was finally ceded to Britain in 1814.

The French influence is indelible in the life of the island. All place names are French with Roman Catholicism being the religion of some 80% of the people. A derivative of the French language "Patois" is widely spoken, although the language of education and commerce has been English since the early nineteenth century.

St. Lucia, like other Caribbean countries, has a racially mixed population with people of African descent in the majority, forming some 90% of the population. People of East Indian descent make up approximately 3%, Whites 1% and mixed 3%.

The island has a monarchical government with the Queen as Sovereign represented by a local governor. The government is bicameral, based on the Westminster model with an elected assembly and a Senate, which consists of members appointed by the Governor General on recommendations of the government and the official opposition.

### **6.3 The Economic Background**

The economy of St. Lucia was founded on slave labour in the cultivation of sugar cane, based on the plantation economy model. The rise of the peasantry after emancipation saw diversification into a wide range of cash crops and cultivation of smallholdings. Banana cultivation has replaced sugarcane as the main agricultural product.

The economy is still heavily dependent on agriculture and tourism as the main sources of employment and foreign exchange. Attempts are being made to achieve economic

diversification without much success. Tourism has become the leading foreign exchange earner, ahead of agriculture.

Economic diversification is critical to the economic success of St. Lucia, especially in light of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling to end preferential treatment of banana exports to Britain. This presents St. Lucia and other banana growing countries in the region with what may be their most serious economic crisis, because they will not be able to compete with cheaper bananas from Central America.

St. Lucia has achieved much in terms of infrastructural development over the past 20 years. There have been massive development and modernisation of its infrastructure. These include harbours, piped water, electricity, airports and roads. Health and Social Services have also been improved. The water supply has increased with some 50% of homes connected and 85% have easy access to water from public sources. Health services have also increased and no community is now more than a couple of miles away from a health centre.

The economic development strategy has been the development of existing economic sectors such as tourism, agriculture, exports etc. The Central Planning Unit attached to the Ministry of Finance has responsibility for economic planning and produces the medium to long-term strategy. However, it is unclear from these strategy documents whether there is a particular perspective on the development process or indeed a long-term view of how the economy will or should be developed.

#### **6.4 Organisation and Structure of the Education System**

The organisation and management of education in St. Lucia, reflects the basic system inherited from the colonial era and the various attempts at reform. It has its genesis in public administration from which educational administration developed, and influenced by some of the features that pertain to small administrative systems.

It was noted earlier that one of the features of small states is the relatively personal and transparent nature of relationships that have implications for management and administration.



#### **6.4.1 The Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour and Broadcasting**

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Labour and Broadcasting has overall responsibility for the strategic management of the education system.

The organisation reflects the old hierarchical models of public administration, based very much on the principles of classical scientific management. There is a predilection for structures, rules, and procedures similar to those suggested by Khan (1990) and Thomas (1996). The very organisation of ministries and the way that division of labour is organised reflects this. The ministries are organised in a segmented way, by levels and type of educational provision, reflecting the historical organisation of education in the region. The structure of ministries reflects in the main a segmentation based on the structure of the school system: preschool, infant, primary and secondary school with their support structures of education officers, with responsibility for each of these areas.

The ministry is organised along macro functions, sometimes grouped. The structure is based on the core functions that the Ministry undertakes: primary and secondary education, policy formulation, teacher recruitment and training. Besides these basic functions, other specialist functions are undertaken. Like other small states the Ministry combines several functions, particularly those generally associated with or related to education such as sports, youth and culture, as evidenced by its title, to make it truly multi-functional. However, the combinations are subject to frequent changes.

The structure of the Ministry of Education (1996) is shown in Figure 4. At the top of the hierarchy is the Minister, who is assisted by a Permanent Secretary. The Minister is responsible for policy making, and the Permanent Secretary heads the secretariat in charge of policy implementation and the determination of educational priorities.

Below the ministerial level are the different departments reflecting the different functions, of which the Education Department is the largest. The Chief Education Officer oversees the work of Education Officers, some of whom supervises the school

districts while others have specific national roles such as curriculum development, science, music and pedagogy.

The next tier down consists of the heads of departments within the Ministry. There is currently five such departments viz.: Education, Culture, UNESCO, Labour and Library Services. The Chief Education Officer who oversees the work of education officers and specialist advisers leads education, which is the focus of this study. The schools education officers in turn supervise district education officers, who work directly with the schools in their districts

The Principal Assistant Secretary oversees the central administrative function for the whole Ministry. Policy changes and initiatives are generally communicated through ministerial circulars with very little guidance or consultation.

Decisions in respect of recruitment of teachers, administration of school budgets, repairs and maintenance, selection of textbooks, examinations, staff development, training and disciplinary matters are all decided centrally.

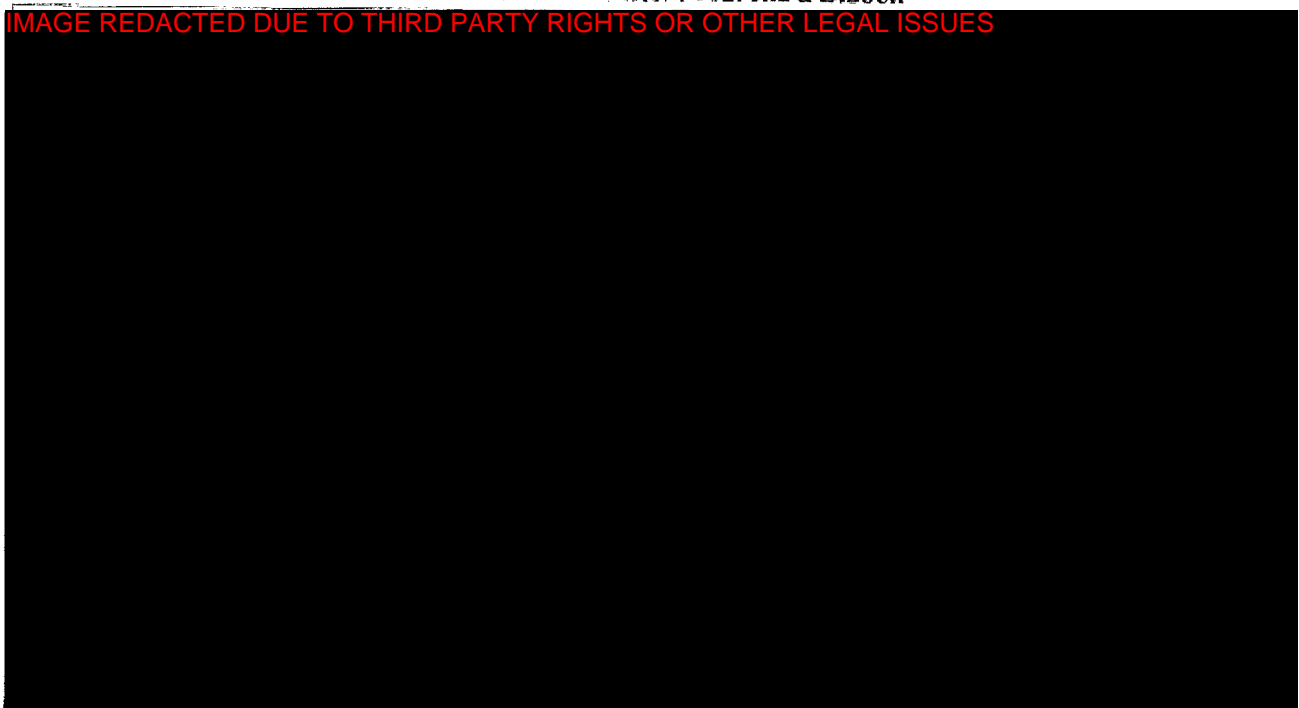
Bray, (1991b) concluded that ministries of education in small states are designed to achieve two broad objectives:

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*in the ministry. (Bray, 1991b: 38)*

The small size of the ministry has also meant a greater degree of prioritisation about what functions are undertaken and which ones are not. Bray (1993) tabulated the functions undertaken and those not undertaken by ministries in small states. He found wide variations in the functions undertaken by ministries, and that not all functions associated with education were undertaken. This reflects to some extent, the historical development of education, local priorities and capacities.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART  
OF THE  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE & LABOUR**



**Figure 4. Structure of the Education System in St. Lucia**

Where the ministry does not undertake functions, it does not mean that they are not undertaken. Often, other government departments or bodies carry them out.

In St. Lucia for example, the Government Treasury pays teacher salaries and teaching appointments are dealt with by an independent statutory body, the Teaching Service Commission (TSC)

#### **6.4.2 The School system**

School attendance is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 15. The basic school system comprises pre school (age 2-5), infants (age 5-7), junior primary (age 7-11), senior primary (age 12-15) secondary (age 12-16) and tertiary (16+). A flowchart of the education system is shown in Figure 5. The senior primary schools, which span almost the same age group as secondary school, cater for those pupils who do not make it to secondary school.

Although the school system appears to be segmented and divided into distinct phases, the management of the system and the recording of information are done in terms of pre school, primary, secondary and tertiary. The analysis, which follows will therefore, be along the same lines.

##### **6.4.2.1 Pre-School**

Pre-School is for children between the ages of 2 to 5 years. There are some 150 such schools, all of which are privately owned. There are also some 25 day centres with approximately 6000 enrolments in 1995/96. The learning programme in these schools consists of play, which helps children to socialise, build confidence and explore the environment.

The Ministry of Education formed a Pre-School Unit in 1985, which has the responsibility for overseeing pre-schools. The provision remains relatively underdeveloped and under resourced and the training and development of its teachers remains a major problem.

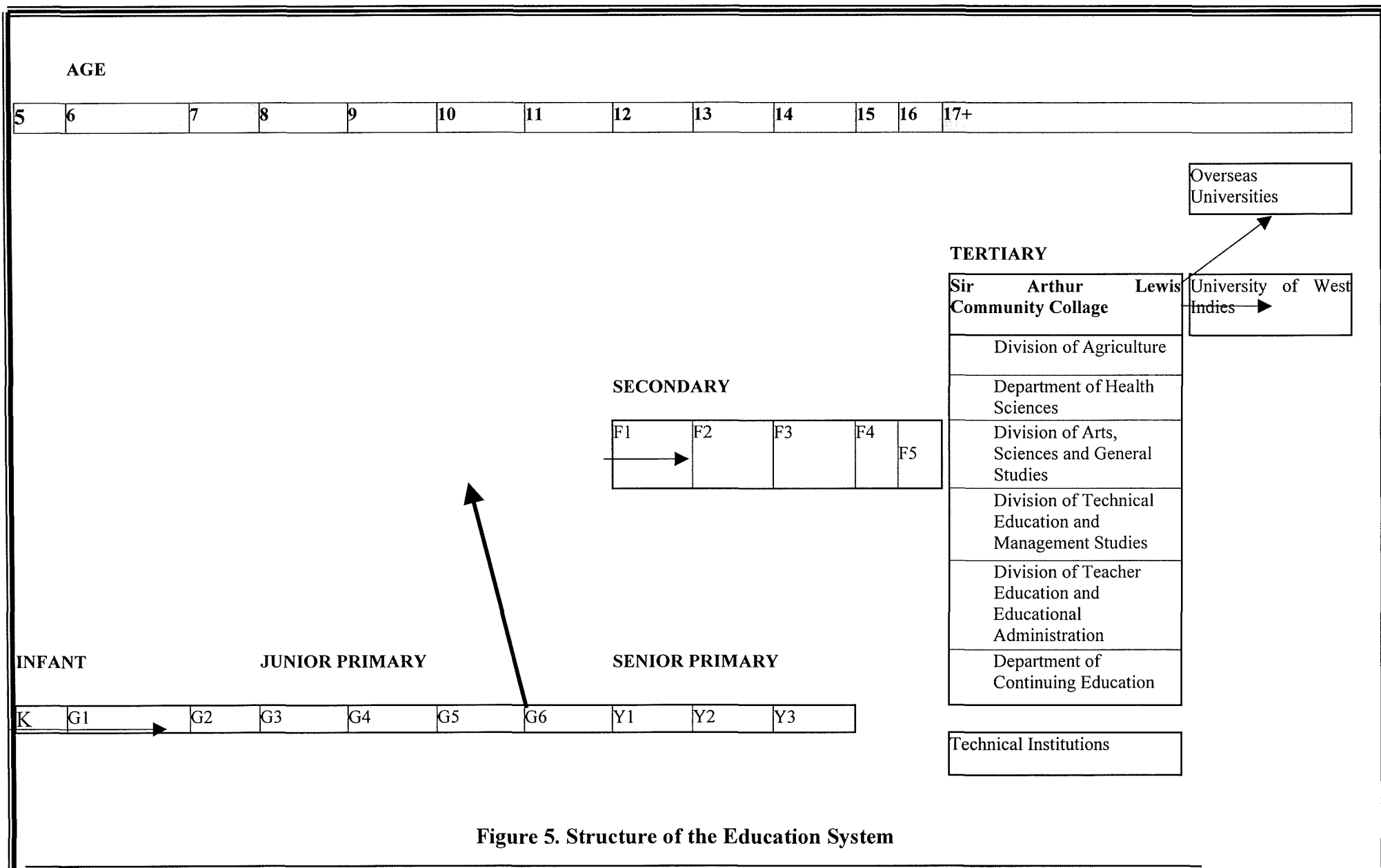


Figure 5. Structure of the Education System

#### **6.4.2.2 Primary Education**

St Lucia has achieved universal primary education in that, everyone in the eligible age group attends school. There were 83 primary schools in 1997/98 with a total enrolment of 30,306 pupils.

The primary curriculum is quite broad and consists of the core subjects of English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Other subjects include Religious Education, Physical Education, Art & Craft, Home Economics and Agricultural Science

St. Lucia used to have what was referred to as "all age" or combined schools, which catered for children between the ages of 5 and 15. This has been restructured and broken down into infant, junior primary and senior primary stages. However, it is the performance of the junior primary school that dominates primary education in St. Lucia. The reason is that it is at the end of this stage, that selection kicks in via the Common Entrance Examination (CEM) for the treasured and limited number of secondary school places available.

While the number of secondary places has been increasing steadily over the past five years, approximately 30% of the age cohort do not have access to secondary school, and remain in the senior primary schools. The view among education officials is that, those who fail the Common Entrance Examination lack the capacity for academic work Fredericks (1991). While there may be some truth in this, it betrays the academic bias of the education system, and begs the question of universal secondary education.

The senior primary school remains an anomaly, if not an aberration in the school system. The authorities plan to address this problem by offering some sort of pre-vocational and technical training. This is very much an intention because there are no available resources to finance this programme. The pupils in these schools still follow what is pretty much a full academic programme, and take the School Leaving

Examination at the end of the senior primary phase, but it is a qualification that is hardly recognised and carries no currency.

Some pupils may also have a second chance to go to secondary school by taking the Common Entrance Examination again at age 13.

The senior primary school was described by Dr Didicus Jules<sup>14</sup> as “Purgatory”. As reported in the *Voice of St. Lucia* newspaper. He described them as:

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*much passivity on the part of students. (Cited in Emanus, 1995:32)*

There are several challenges facing primary education in St. Lucia. While the proportion of trained teachers is high (69% in 1997/98), there is wide variation between schools, ranging from those 20% to 100% trained teachers<sup>15</sup>. However, the teacher student ratio is favourable at 1:27 in 1997/98<sup>16</sup> academic year. Overcrowding is a major problem in the Capital where a shift system is in use. The schools suffer from lack of administrative support, materials and equipment and the poor state of school plant.

#### **6.4.2.3. Secondary Education**

The secondary school provision consists of two types of schools, Senior Secondary and Comprehensive Schools.

All 11 year olds take the Common Entrance Examination, and approximately 70% of the age cohort now attends secondary school. In 1998/99, there were 17 secondary schools with a total enrolment of 11,847 students. This represents approximately 25% increase over the past 7 years

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<sup>14</sup> Currently Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education

<sup>15</sup> St. Lucia Statistical Digest 1994-1998

<sup>16</sup> St. Lucia Statistical Digest 1994-1998

The gender balance favours females (56%). This reflects several factors: the higher proportion of girls in that age range in the population and the tendency for girls to perform better in the Common Entrance Examination.

The secondary curriculum consists of the core subjects of English Language, Mathematics, Religious Knowledge, Literature, Social Studies, History or Geography, Science and a foreign Language. Optional subjects include, French, Spanish, Business Studies, Economics, Accounts, Office Practice, Biology, Chemistry, Integrated Science and Agricultural Science.

Secondary schools provide grammar type education with emphasis on academic subjects leading to the CXC Examinations, which replaced GCSE as they main form of external assessment for secondary school leavers.

The other option open to those who pass the Common Entrance Examination is to progress onto a comprehensive secondary school (4 of the secondary schools are designated as such). These schools provide traditional general curricula until age 15, when students take either a technical, vocational or a commercial option, which lead to CXC examinations.

Students who achieve the required number of passes at the required grades, (4 CXC passes) may have the opportunity to progress to Sir Arthur Lewis Community College to do A Levels. The limited number of A level places available means that many of those with the required number of CXC passes will not find places.

Despite efforts to introduce a broader and more relevant curriculum, secondary schools are still very much academically oriented. The curricula are still not sufficiently geared to meeting local needs for technicians, managers and entrepreneurs. The prevailing attitude still cherishes (and only cherishes) academic achievement, and all regards vocational education as second best: teachers, parents and students.



The lack of appropriate technical and vocational education is often cited as one major weakness of the education system in St. Lucia and the Caribbean generally.

Dr Edsel Edmunds, former St. Lucian Ambassador to the United Nations, stated the problem most eloquently:

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*scholars with their training. (Voice, December 4, 1993:7 cited in Emanus, 1995:37.)*

The problem remains however, that the ablest students do not and are not encouraged to undertake technical and vocational training. Parents see academic training as the better route to economic success. In addition, the successful role models around them are all products of academic success. The academic-vocational divide is very noticeable in St. Lucia.

Secondary education continues to face mounting challenges. The provision of universal secondary education remains a major problem. Improving the quality of education as perceived in terms of examination passes remains a major problem. However, developing an education system that responds to global as well as local issues is also problematic. This is also intertwined with the perennial problem of curriculum relevance, in ensuring that the curriculum content bears some relevance to daily lives, interest and aspirations.

Foundations have been laid on which to build success. In 1998/99 over 80% of teachers in secondary schools were trained, with over half, (54%) being graduates i.e. holding at least a Bachelor's degree<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> St. Lucia Statistical Digest 1994-1998

#### **6.4.2.4 Tertiary Education**

St. Lucia has only one tertiary institution in the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. It was formed in 1986 and incorporated the existing institutions of St. Lucia Teachers' College, Morne Technical College and the A Level College.

The community college offers a range of programmes in teacher training, nursing education, agricultural education, business and management studies, craft & technology and hospitality and A levels. It runs the first year of undergraduate degrees of the University of the West Indies and a 2-year degree in Educational Administration for principals and other senior school staff.

St. Lucia is not a campus state of the University of the West Indies and so personnel have to go overseas for graduate and undergraduate studies, at campus state of University of the West Indies (Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica) or overseas, United States, Canada and United Kingdom. This is very costly and therefore, limits the number of people that can be sponsored. There are no mandatory grants for undergraduate studies but there is a student loan scheme in operation and the government offers many scholarships for overseas study each year.

During the 1992/93 academic year, there were 28 teachers in training overseas, of which 16 were following degree courses<sup>18</sup>.

Tertiary and higher education present many challenges, not least the lack of higher education locally. The local training capacity and provisions are not enough to meet local human resource needs, either in the present or in the future.

#### **6.4.2.5. Adult Education**

Some efforts are being made to provide adult education in an attempt to fight illiteracy, which is quite high among adults. In 1980, functional literacy in St. Lucia was reported to be approximately 61%.

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<sup>18</sup> St. Lucia Digest of Statistics 1992-93

A major literacy programme was launched in 1984 to:

- (a) Eradicate illiteracy by the year 1995
- (b) Provide numeracy and literacy, and general basic education that will enhance the potential of the disadvantaged and marginal people in St. Lucia so that they contribute to the development of their individual families, their community and the nation.

The strategy for achieving this was to set up several Adult Education Centres throughout the island. There are now some 21 centres with approximately 766 learners, 70% being female.

#### **6.4.2.6 Special Education**

There are four special schools for people with learning disabilities and difficulties. One caters for a wide range of disabilities, with each the other three catering for people that are visually impaired, auditory impaired and mentally challenged.

It is planned to develop a policy on special education that will include inter alia, the integration of SEN students in mainstream schools.

### **6.5 Policy Making and Control**

The Ministry of Education has responsibility for policy, but there is no formally constituted policy-making body. Ideas and proposals from Heads of Department or other officials are usually channelled via the Permanent Secretary to the Minister, but there are officers within the ministry that are consulted, and meet regularly to consider policy issues.

Meetings are held with departments/sections and at different levels within the Ministry. The Permanent Secretary meets the Heads of Department and the Chief Education Officer meets professional staff in the education department to discuss departmental issues and ease communication.

While consultations may take place with senior officers within the Ministry, it has not extended to other stakeholders in education, such as teachers, parents, local

communities and the commercial sector. Teachers have not traditionally been involved or consulted on educational policy and initiatives. The role of the teaching fraternity has been confined to implementing policy. However, there was very extensive public consultation about the Education Reform Strategy, but that seemed to have been a ‘one off’ and not part of the normal policy process.

The historical involvement of the church in education (Chapter 5) has resulted in a dual form of control by church and state, which is a constant source of tension, conflict and confusion. (This issue is critically examined later in Chapter 8).

## **6.6 Management at School Level**

Schools in St. Lucia have a relatively simple management structure. While the model does not strictly conform to the formal models in terms of being a structural, systems, rational, bureaucratic or hierarchical models of management (Bush, 1995), the features associated with the structural, bureaucratic and hierarchical models are very prominent. Consequently, great emphasis is placed on the importance of the hierarchical authority structure, adherence to rules and regulations, accountability and vertical communications.

The principal sits at the apex of a very flat pyramid. Some secondary schools have second tier posts of vice-principals, although the eligibility criteria for having vice – principals are far from clear. Some schools (secondary) also have heads of departments or heads of faculties or schools. Most middle management posts such as heads of departments or faculties are not established or remunerated posts, but staff take on these responsibilities on a purely voluntary basis and out of goodwill. Secondary schools have some administrative support in the form of bursars and other administrative staff, but there is no such administrative support available to headteachers of primary schools, who have to do their own administration in addition to covering for absent staff, since there is no system of ‘supply cover’.

Principals have the prime responsibility for the effective and efficient management of their schools. Matters of staff selection and recruitment, budgets, discipline (staff and pupils) curriculum and examinations are all taken at the centre although principals

have some minimal involvement. Interestingly, secondary schools operate a form of devolved budget for consumables, but no such arrangements exist for primary schools. However, primary schools are allocated notional budgets, which they can draw down by requisitioning materials from the Ministry's stocks. This arrangement can be quite unsatisfactory, because primary schools often have to make do with whatever stocks are available in the Ministry's stores and not necessarily what the schools want or need. Moreover, primary schools are not normally funded to purchase small items of equipment such as copying machines or even telephones, all of which must be funded by their own fund raising efforts, and even where funding is raised, it is subject to central control by the Ministry of Education.

A policy decision was taken to set up Boards of Management for secondary schools, to assist principals and bring about wide community participation in education, but these have not been successful. (*The operation of these boards is critically examined Chapter 8*). Primary, especially church schools are supposed to have Boards of management led by the Church, but hardly any exists.

Other than the few secondary schools with Boards of management, where there is ostensibly, some accountability, there is hardly any community or parental involvement in educational decision-making at school level.

Notwithstanding the lack of public accountability and public involvement in educational decision-making, principals have few powers of decision-making, since most decisions are taken at the Centre, despite initiatives aimed at democratising education through decentralisation (Discussed in the next chapter).

## **6.7 Selection, Equity and Access**

Inequality in education, especially at post-primary level, has been a feature of education in St. Lucia. The children of the privileged continue to be the main beneficiaries of secondary and tertiary education. The situation is being perpetuated by selection at several critical points in the school system, all of which discriminates against the disadvantaged.

This is not surprising, because secondary education was primarily for the children of the wealthy and others in the upper echelons of society. The poor and other disadvantaged groups continue to struggle to cope with and use the system. Even where children of the poor win scholarships, many of them are unable to take up the places because their parents cannot afford the other associated expenses on books, uniform, subsistence and travel, which can be quite considerable and prohibitive. This has been made particularly difficult for rural dwellers, as secondary education has largely been an urban provision. The situation has been improving with the expansion of secondary schools to the main towns and some rural areas, making secondary education more accessible to those who live in the countryside.

The system of allocating students to secondary schools is very elitist and serves to perpetuate the status quo. All the top performers in terms of mean scores in the Common Entrance Examination are assigned to the two prestigious single-sex grammar-type secondary schools. The allocation of students in terms of achievement is so elitist and selective, that the lowest score of students assigned to the top two secondary schools is generally higher than the highest score of students assigned to some of the other secondary schools. It should not be surprising that the two prestigious schools completely outperform all the others in CXC's by substantial margins.

A recent feature of education in St. Lucia is the growth of private primary schools, in response to demands from middle class and professional parents as they try to give their children an advantage in competing for the limited secondary places available. This serves to further disadvantage the children of those already at a disadvantage and perpetuate elitism, which is endemic in the secondary school system.

## **6.8 Expenditure on Education**

Education is financed entirely by central government (except for a few private primary schools), but the Church makes some contribution towards maintenance of some of its schools. However, for church schools, the State pays teachers' salaries, capital costs and even pays a subvention to the church.

The proportion of expenditure on education in St. Lucia compared to other OECS is shown in Table 5.

Expenditure on education in St. Lucia has been rising and now stands at approximately 8.5% of GDP, representing 23% of recurrent expenditure: the highest proportion of national income spent on education by any OECS member state. Almost a quarter of recurrent expenditure (23%) is on education

**Table 5. Allocation of Expenditure to Education in OECS States (1990)**

Country	% GDP	% Recurrent Expenditure
St. Lucia	8.5	23
Dominica	6	19
St. Vincent	7	17.9
Grenada	6.3	19
Antigua-Barbuda	3.8	14.3
Montserrat	na	18.1
British Virgin Islands	na	14.2

*Source: Compiled from World Bank Report 1990 and Ministry of Education Estimates*

The expansion of education at all levels is placing increasing fiscal pressures on educational finance. It is highly unlikely that the state will be able to finance the increasing demand for education and alternative means of financing will have to be sought.

The allocation of expenditure to the different levels of education and the unit cost per student is shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Budget Allocations 1992/93 (\$EC)

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*Source: Ministry of Education, Statistical Digest, 1992-93.*

It can be seen that well over half recurrent expenditure goes on primary and under a third of secondary education. However, the unit cost per student in primary education is about half that of secondary education. The greatest disparity is in the unit cost of tertiary education, where the cost per student is almost ten times that of the primary schools and five times that of secondary schools. It may be a better reflection of the importance attributed to the different levels. Primary education remains the 'Cinderella' of the education system. This is reflected in the general physical state of primary school plant, administrative support, learning resources and critically the poor quality of primary education.

The gap in the level of expenditure between the different levels is likely to continue. The projected expenditure per pupil to 2005/2006 is \$1795 per primary pupil and \$3886 per secondary pupil<sup>19</sup>

It is not clear the extent to which these disparities reflect the relative costs of provision, but the trend in developing countries has been to better resource secondary and tertiary education, at the expense of primary education. This might indicate a need to review the allocation of resources with a view to shifting the balance in favour of primary education – something, which governments are loathe to do, since secondary education is seen as academic, prestigious and providing some of the much needed skills for the local economy.

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<sup>19</sup> St. Lucia Statistical Digest 1994-1998



## **6.9 Performance of the Education System**

This section examines the approaches to measuring performance of the system and provides an assessment of performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

### **6.9.1 Efficiency**

It was explained earlier (*Section 4.6*) that, efficiency of education in OECS is generally measured in terms of several indicators that include: enrolment rates, dropout and completion rates, staff student ratios and repetition rates.

Drop out and repetitions are not problematic in St. Lucia. Repetition is not an efficiency issue in St. Lucia as there is automatic progression through the grades with hardly any repetition, except in exceptional circumstances.

### **6.9.2 Effectiveness**

It has been noted earlier in the study, that the effectiveness of education in the region is seen purely in terms of examination results, although other indicators such as functional literacy and numeracy are sometimes used.

#### **6.9.2.1 Primary Education**

Performance in examinations remains the main and only performance indicator for measuring the effectiveness of the school system in St. Lucia, and performance in the Common Entrance Examination is widely regarded as the proxy. The Common Entrance Examination is the dominant feature of primary education in St. Lucia and teaching is geared, if not dedicated, to preparing pupils to pass the examination.

In 1993, 4,867 students sat the common entrance examinations, of which 49.3% was female, yet 56.5% of those assigned to secondary schools were female. (Albertin, 1993) This meant 47.7% of all females who took the examinations were assigned to secondary schools, compared to 35.7% of males. This shows a trend that has been evident in the Common Entrance Examination for some considerable time: girls always outperform boys at these examinations, a trend which continues into secondary examination and reflected in performance in the CXC's.

Performances in mathematics and language papers were extremely poor. The relatively high standard deviation shows that there were wide differences in the scores achieved by students. It was reported that 686 students, approximately 14% of those who took the examination scored zero in the mathematics paper. In the Essay and Summary paper, of the 2,460 students who took the examination, just under half, (45%) scored zero and in the essay (Albertin, 1995).

There is a major problem as to what happens to those that that meets the minimum requirements but cannot be allocated places, (a subject of constant political controversy) as well as those who fail to meet the passing requirements.

If examinations results alone are regarded as the main indicator of effectiveness of the education system, then the systems cannot be judged effective. However, to get a real indication of effectiveness, even on this criterion, some of performance targets would have to be set against which the extent of effectiveness can be judged.

#### **6.9.2.2 Secondary Education**

Secondary schools focus almost exclusively on CXC examinations. The examination dominates the life of secondary schools and is pre-eminent, although it is taken by only about two-thirds of the age cohort who are in secondary education.

Research by the World Bank (1993) shows students in the OECS were performing very badly in the CXC examinations (Table 7), with only 11.8% entrants on average, gaining the yardstick of passes in 5 or more subjects. This can be seen against an average of 47% of entrants gaining the equivalent qualifications in the UK. The performance is even worse, given that the entrants are selected and were supposed to be the top 33% of the relevant age cohort that attended secondary school at that time.

However St. Lucia performed well by Caribbean standards in having the highest proportion of entrants with 5 passes compared to the Turks and Caicos with a mere 2.1%.

A striking feature of the World Bank Research is the wide disparities in the levels of attainment between countries, with some countries performing five times better than others. This is an area that merits further study.

**Table 7. Proportion of CXC Entrants Gaining 5+ passes and 2+ A levels by Country (1990)**

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*Source: World Bank Country Survey, Caribbean Region 1993.*

Performance in A Level examinations is even worse with an average of just 1.7% of entrants gaining 2 or more passes

However, there are some encouraging signs that might augur well for the future performance. In 1998, the pass rate in Caribbean History was 74%; French, 74% and Integrated Science, 84% and 79% in Information Technology, English 71%, but a disappointing 39% in Mathematics.

The performance in individual subjects compares well with other OECS states, and an increasing number of students obtain 3 or 4 passes. However, there seems to be major problems in getting over the 5-subject threshold.

## **6.10 Factors Influencing Educational Management Administration**

This section examines the factors that influence educational policy and practice in St. Lucia. A perspective from Public administration is first given, followed by an examination of the factors.

### **6.10.1 A Perspective from Public Administration**

Educational administration in St. Lucia like the rest of the Caribbean is conducted within the context of public administration. Policy and practice in public administration was shaped initially by the colonial government, but have been influenced in recent times by Western cultures and their ability to overshadow the intellectual traditions in the region. The colonial heritage, the domination of western intellectual thinking, and the associated educational dependence, account for the major critical aspects of administration in the Caribbean.

The system of government inherited, incorporated a culture of political patronage and dispensation of favours. When indigenous politicians were elected in the postcolonial period, their concern was not so much with the impartiality of civil servants but rather, their commitment and loyalty. As Mills (1970) observed, the introduction of the ministerial form of government and the election of local politicians has been accompanied by friction, tension and suspicion between ministers and officials.

Hope (1983) gave some indication of the approaches to public administration adopted by some Caribbean governments and their consequences.

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*attempts were unsuccessful. (Hope, 1983:50.)*

Politics has been a particularly strong influence in Caribbean life. Hope (1987) argued that after independence, the colonial administration was transformed into an organisation emphasising the sovereignty of politics, rather than the supremacy of administration.

Khan (1995) and Khan & McDonald (1995) argued that political dominance continued to subordinate management and manageability to partisanship and politicisation. Khan (1995) used an abundance of superlatives to describe the nature and extent of that political dominance:

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*decision cycle and disaffected clientele. (Khan, 1995:47).*

Professor Clive Thomas (1996) summarised the current state of public sector policy in the Caribbean as follows.

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*(Thomas, 1996:52).*

The challenge of wide-ranging public sector reform was put most eloquently by Gomes (1996), Director of the Caribbean Centre for Administration and Development.

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*suffice for 2000 and beyond. (Gomes, 1996:72)*

This summarises the major challenge facing public administration in the region.

#### **6.10.2 The Colonial Inheritance.**

There are strong vestiges of a neo-colonialism and the increasing influence of North America. Educational dependence and the relevance of imported models and globalisation are also important factors. How these factors interlink and influence contemporary practices in educational administration and management is examined below.

Current management and administrative practices in educational management and administration reflect the traditions inherited from the colonial era. As Murray (1979) noted:

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*present. (Murray, 1979:34)*

These newly independent states became even more dependent on former colonial powers for technical and financial support for public sector reform projects. This type of dependence ensured that some level of colonial influence and control was maintained. Therefore, it became very difficult to exercise local control over policies as they were in many cases influenced, if not determined by donor countries and international aid organisations.

Criticisms have been voiced about the inappropriateness of the system inherited from colonialism but the basic system remains intact. There are several reasons for this reluctance to change, much of it due to neo-colonialism.

Neo-colonialism is generally used to refer to the control of a state (and its institutions) by external powers and forces, although it gives the appearance of being independent. As described by Nkrumah (1975), its essence:

TEXT REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES *ent and has all  
ty its economic  
(Cited in Bray,  
1993:334).*

Local administrators replicating the behaviour, attitudes and adhering to the values of the former colonial administrators manifest this neo-colonialism in postcolonial states.

The British education system is well established and held in the highest regard in the Caribbean and is a factor that impedes change. Given a choice to study anywhere in the world, language issues aside, people from the Caribbean are likely choose the United Kingdom. This owes much to the days of empire where the only education that the colonies were exposed to was the British system of education.

However, while there is pride in associating the education system in St. Lucia with that of the UK, what is not realised however, is the fact that the system of education they inherited and continue to operate no longer exists in Britain. The British system has changed in almost every conceivable way, especially in the critical areas such as management & governance, control, finance, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, accreditation, performance management and appraisal. This association is now purely historical because education in the UK has undergone radical changes.

Another reason for the lack of, or slowness in the pace of change is that Caribbean leaders, especially those who came to power in the immediate post colonial period, were themselves products of the colonial system of education and received their

academic and professional training in the United Kingdom. They attribute their successes to the quality of the system of education and would resist attempts to change it.

### 6.10.3 Policy Borrowing Transferability of Educational Models

Education in St. Lucia continues to be influenced by external ideas, models and notions of education. While policies and practices were imposed in colonial times, but now there is great deal of wilful borrowing, as developing countries try to find what they think are tried and tested solutions to the problem, and trying not to reinvent the wheel.

The issue as to whether and the extent to which these models can be transferred to developing countries continue to occupy the minds of practitioners and academics. Marshall (1984) posed the question thus:

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1984:28)

developed in  
(Marshall,

Wiggins (1979) contended that the assumption regarding the generalizability of educational models of the developed world is both morally wrong and scientifically primitive. He argued that the phenomenon of education was contextually bound and that it was the failure by the developed world to recognise this fact that had led to these efforts to help the developing world being branded as imperialism and colonialism.

Kigundu (1983) explained the nature of the contextually bound nature of organisations.

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developed for  
may not  
s for the  
developed  
chnology  
sistance)  
(Cited in  
Newton, 1985:94).



The Commonwealth Secretariat (1986) also warned that:

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*smaller states of the world (Commonwealth Secretariat (1986:5).*

In the highly decentralised education systems in the West, the principal is in some ways the chief executive of the organisation, whereas St. Lucia with a centralised education system the principal operates more like a middle manager, which necessitates different approaches to both training and institutional management.

In addition, the responsibility of the principal in St. Lucia extends well beyond the school to wider community activities to include community development projects, sports and other associations. The principal is also expected to be a role model and exemplar. Miller (1986) outlined the expectations of principals:

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ing, self-  
is also  
s totally  
(Miller,  
1986:40).

These expectations reflect, in some ways, the qualities and lifestyles that teachers were expected to lead when the church controlled education. These are of course unrealistic expectations, but principals are cognisant of these expectations, which undoubtedly influence their behaviour.

Recent studies have considered the cultural context of educational administration. (Bajunid, 1996; Hallinger, 1996) The main proposition is that, because of the diversity of educational management and administration contexts, a wide range of issues emerge that have to be addressed by educational decision makers in their own national contexts, which will vary from one country to another and vastly from developed and developing country. This cultural focus of educational administration calls for a re-examination of the assumptions that there is a body of knowledge that provides the definitive approaches to the efficient and efficient of educational

institutions. Bajunid (1996) argued that the motive to build an indigenous corpus of knowledge is neither political nor intellectual arrogance, but emerges from a desire to find meaning and relevance in defining national intellectual and professional identities.

Hallinger (1996) explored how culture might enter the thinking about theory, research and training in educational administration. He noted the tendency for Western intellectual traditions and practices to overshadow those of other cultures and argued that the proliferation published information, modern methods of efficient dissemination of information have stultified the emergence of modern perspectives on educational administration and management from non-western perspective.

TEXT REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES leadership in  
red across  
(Hallinger,  
1996:101:)

These issues are critical and relevant for the future development of an effective and effective education system.

#### **6.10.4 Educational Dependence**

Many developing countries including St. Lucia rely upon external agencies for international assistance for educational developments at all levels within the education system.

The demand for technical assistance continues indefinitely when the skills and expertise required are not available locally. Traditionally, aid agencies have focused their efforts on supporting infrastructure developments in education (school buildings, materials etc) but not on changing social, economic or political structures to create new attitudes and values, which arguably, can have greater impact on educational development. (Sayigh, 1991). It could be argued, that while aid may have helped in expanding education by providing buildings and teachers, it has not contributed significantly to the development of coherent education systems.

Conventional theory about aid is being reviewed in the light new research, questioning the impact of development aid. A review by the Agency for International Development (AID, 1989) concluded:

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*1960s have ever graduated from dependent status" (AID, 1989: 111-112).*

This situation is further exacerbated by the practice of 'tied aid' in which recipient countries are forced to spend aid money on supplies, equipment and services from donor countries, which may not provide the best or even good value for money.

The conditions attaching to international assistance, whether it is aid or loan, also exert considerable influence on educational development. The Basic Education Reform Project in St. Lucia almost came to halt, because the government was refusing to comply with what it saw as unreasonable demands by the World Bank. The following extract from the *St. Lucia Mirror (Internet Version)* on 4 September 1998 provides evidence of such influence and pressure.

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*us as if it was a grant". (St. Lucia Mirror, 4 September 1998).*

Development assistance is provided by a host of institutions including governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), business and academic

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20 Louis George is the former Education Minister, whose party lost the 1997 general Election which brought Michel into Office

institutions. The Commonwealth Secretariat, Organisation of Canadian Overseas Development (OCOD), and Canadian International Development Association (CIDA) have been active in management development in the region including the training of educational administrators. The World Bank has also been providing finance for educational projects.

A major form of international assistance includes training in educational management and administration. Such assistance form part of a range of strategies that include institutional development, regional and technical co-operation, overseas training, in-country training and the provision of experts, research and information exchange, curriculum and materials development. (Rodwell, 1988).

The relevance and impact of such training have been a cause of great concern. Anecdotal evidence suggests that overseas institutions that train Caribbean practitioners in educational administration do little to provide appropriate context. It could be because there is very limited knowledge in some of the institution about the participants' home context. The tasks of determining relevance and providing context, therefore, often lie with the overseas participants, which places them at a considerable disadvantage, compared to 'home' students. Not only do they have to cope with the course content, especially its theories and models, but they must also try to translate and adapt them to their own home contexts to their local context with little informed guidance.

The continued reliance on foreign experts means increasing the degree and level of dependence and increasing external influences on policy. The use of technical assistance, foreign experts and consultants has meant increased and continued reliance on external advice. In addition, while this in not problematic per se, it creates difficulties. The quality of the technical personnel can be quite poor. Training programmes of various technical assistance efforts generally supply a cadre of personnel who are often extensions of the institutions in which they are trained, but who do not share common development goals and ideologies.

The situation is further exacerbated by the lack of local capacity, ability and the reluctance to challenge consultants' reports. This is particularly so, where funding for educational projects might be dependent on acceptance of recommendations. It is most unlikely that any St. Lucian would want to be the person who jeopardises the chances of obtaining foreign assistance by challenging consultants' reports!

This reliance also extends to basic research, where the information used is based on research carried out in the West. Even where local research is undertaken, it is sponsored by aid agencies and carried out by their own researchers or those appointed by them, with local researches playing marginal roles. The problem with this approach is that unless one knows the local context well, the conclusions to be drawn from such work and critically, the policy recommendations will be based on western perspectives and interpretation and thus, likely to be deficient in local context and cultural relevance. This exerts further influence on the development of the education system.

London (1993) cited the case of an education project in Trinidad & Tobago that failed because of the models adopted. A rationalistic model based on positivist view of the world was adopted in which, objectives were sequentially and logically defined, implementation was linear and success technically defined. The reality however, was an environment that was dysfunctional between ideology and the implementation paradigm, which manifested itself in conflict, tensions, contradictions, delays and uncertainty.

However, when the project was taken over locally, they were able to contextualise the project and make the environmental adjustments that led to its eventual success.

Reducing dependence will require a paradigm shift in the thinking on development assistance. A shift that reflects the primacy of the human dimension and the development of self-reliance in educational development. Aid should have the ultimate aim of empowering recipient countries to determine and provide for their needs. It should not be seen as a means of transferring "know how" and there are

indications that this is beginning to happen. (Gaglung et al, 1980, Jameson et al, 1991).

#### **6.10.5 Regional Developments.**

Regional developments that influence and impinge, if not determine regional policies underpin this section. The Regional developments examined below should be seen as responses to the international forces such as globalisation and continued dependence.

The formation of the University of the West Indies in 1948 has meant a common system and policy on higher education. However, it was first founded as a college of the University of London, which influenced its structure, curriculum and management. While western models would have influenced them, there has been an increasing amount of local context that has influenced public administration. The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) has been very influential in terms of curriculum and assessment. Potentially, the CXC could play a critical role in influencing the curriculum in promoting technical and vocational education and shifting from the academic orientation in secondary education.

The OECS and the Education Reform Strategy in particular, will have strong influence on education policy in the member states and its impact is already being felt. All the indications are that it will lead to the harmonisation of education policies, which would mean policy change for member states. The Education Reform Strategy is the blueprint that will guide education in the sub-region for some time to come. Adoption of the strategy means that the strategic development of education is already being decided at the sub regional, and not national levels.

CARICOM (1993) produced a draft report, Future of Education in the Caribbean, which outlined a raft of policy objectives for improving education. This is in recognition of common problems and the need to pool resources, as well as the need to make a regional response to the international developments in education. If the resources can be found and agreement reached on implementation, the measures will impact significantly on education in the region.

There is also the Caribbean Centre for Administration and Development (CARICAD), which undertakes research, and advises on public administration and development. Although its influence is not yet significant, it is likely to have a role in influencing policy and practice in the Caribbean. Its director has already called for radical reform in public administration in the region (Gomes, 1996).

It is widely believed that further integration in the Caribbean is inevitable, and the only realistic means of tackling some of these problems and competing or surviving the pressures from the most powerful economic regions of the world, especially the European Union and North American Free Trade Area. (Demas, 1996)

#### **6.10.6 Economic Globalisation**

It was noted earlier (Chapter 4) that globalisation and its implications for education posed major development challenges to the OECS. This section discusses globalisation and its influences on education policy.

As a reminder, globalisation increases competition through lower costs and greater access to the global capital markets and liberalising trade - the type of policy that many developing countries are forced to adopt through the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP), and have implications for education. The reduction in government expenditure means reductions in the already inadequate resources available to education, which in turn exerts enormous pressure on the education system. This pressure is manifest in the forms of reduction in enrolment, teaching materials and the quality of staff, contributing to a decline in both the quantity and quality of education.

The growth of information and communication technologies has facilitated the cheap and instantaneous transfer of information and documentation and movement of people making industries and people increasingly mobile. This has particular implications allowing the use of new methods of teaching and learning and assessment, expanding the potential for cross border learning.

Globalisation also has the potential for international convergence in respect of matter such as culture and ideology. This can be seen is to some extent, an extension of

colonialism dominated with Anglo-American language, economic practices, cultural forms, and social relations. English being the global language has also helped to establish this dominance.

Not only does globalisation affect countries in different regions of the world differently, it also elicits different types of responses. In some quarters, especially those pushing neo-liberal policies, it is seen as essential for the development of the third world.

However, not everyone sees globalisation as having this liberating power, and there is strong opposition from some quarters as evidenced by the “South Africa Confronts Globalisation” Conference in South Africa in 1998, organized by the Campaign Against Neo-liberalism in South Africa, and supported by many NGOs. ([http://aidc.org.za/archives/gl\\_sa\\_confront](http://aidc.org.za/archives/gl_sa_confront))

How have these developments influenced policy in the region? An important element of globalisation in the Caribbean is its legitimising ideology, which presumes the superiority of market forces over government intervention in the economy, of the universal need for ‘market friendly’ policies and the benefits that are to be derived from global competition (Girvan 1997). Consequently, governments have responded by adopting policies of economic liberalization to help them compete. However, competition involves having winners and losers. As the EU remarked:

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*certain countries will never surface. (ACP-EU- Courier July-August 1997.*

The policy approach has been to try to create a stable economic climate, competitive exchange rate, and good infrastructure. Competitiveness tends to be seen in terms of the ability to offer MNCs lower production costs through cheaper labour and higher returns to investment. (Levitt, 1996). This requires governments to provide low cost labour, low taxes and liberalised human resource development, technological innovation, entrepreneurship and managerial capabilities.



The Caribbean has placed particularly strong emphasis on tertiary level education as part of its capacity building programme in light of the educational imperatives of globalisation. The Caribbean has expanded secondary and tertiary level education in the attempt to meet both its domestic needs and the demands of the global economy. The Education system has come under enormous pressure to produce people who are not only skilled to operate in the local economy, but also to service the broader and different needs of the knowledge society. These pressures, and the inability of the states to meet the increasing demand for high quality education, have resulted in an increase in private education at both primary and secondary level, and an increasing number of people going to study overseas and joining the global economy.

Globalisation of educational institutions has effectively removed national and geographical boundaries as virtual delivery becomes more important. This could result in tension and conflict between global and domestic institutions, which has policy implications, and raises issues such as who can and should use it, access to technology, regulations, assessment and validation – all formidable challenges. There are also issues about how cultural differences can be expressed or represented in a largely Anglo-American context and content for local cultures, and how to address the difficulties posed by what is generally referred to as the ‘Americanisation’ of the Caribbean.

Globalisation also forces a revisit to the issue of the purpose of education. The question as to whether education is to serve the purpose of transmitting national values, cultures and identities, or whether its purpose is to get people to produce goods and services in response to the global pattern of demand

#### **6.10.7 The Development of School Effectiveness Research (SER)**

School Effectiveness Research is considered separately and at length, because it is a significant basis for policy to improve the performance of schools in St. Lucia, and the Caribbean or St. Lucian reader may not be familiar with school effectiveness research, which is imperative if the critique that follows is to be understood.

The debate about effective schools really started with the work of Coleman (1966). In a massive study of school performance in the USA, he concluded pupil attainment

was decided by background and characteristics of pupils and hardly by the characteristics of schools. While this raised enormous controversy, it also provided a focal point for intelligent debate and research. Much of the research that followed was a reaction to the findings of Coleman (1966), and generally concluded that schools could make a difference.

The effective schools movement is generally associated with the work of Edmonds (1979), Rutter et al (1979) Brookover and Lezotte (1979). They raised the issue about why there were some schools attaining good results for disadvantaged pupils. They thought that if the features that distinguished those schools from the rest could be identified, developing or establishing those characteristics could improve schools.

Edmonds (1979) using test scores as the main criteria for attainment, identified five features of effective schools:

1. strong leadership of the principal
2. emphasis on mastery of basic skills
3. a clean and orderly school environment
4. high teacher expectations of student performance
5. frequent assessment of students

Research conducted in the United Kingdom in primary and secondary schools came up with lists of features for effective elementary and primary schools (Rutter et al 1979; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Mortimore et al, 1988). Rutter et al (1979), concluded that the features of effective secondary schools were:

- group management in the classroom
- high expectations and standards
- positive teacher models
- feedback on performance
- consistency of school values; and
- pupil acceptance of school norms.

Purkey & Smith (1983), using the findings by Rutter et al, (1979) identified the following features of effective schools.

- school site management
- instructional leadership
- staff stability
- curriculum articulation and organisation
- school staff development
- parental involvement and support
- schoolwide recognition of academic success
- maximised learning time and
- district support

Purkey & Smith (1983 identified what they considered to be process factors in a meta-analysis of several studies

- collaborative planning and collegial relationships;
- sense of community
- clear goals and high expectations
- order and discipline

The literature in this area has since burgeoned, but not without its critics. Ouston (1999) categorises the critiques:

*Critiques of SFEI can be seen as falling into three categories: the first*  
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*education policy. (Ouston, 1999:166).*

#### **6.10.7.1 Problems of School Effectiveness Research**

Scholars of school effectiveness recently began to refer to different 'waves' of school effectiveness studies in part responses to criticisms. (Levin & Lockheed, 1993). According to these scholars, we are now experiencing the 'third wave' of school effectiveness studies. The first wave utilised production functions but following criticisms of the production function approach, a second wave followed, which placed greater emphasis on process variables such as such as teaching styles rather than the physical inputs used in the production function models. The third or "new wave" is

characterised by using multi-level research design that places great emphasis on quantitative effectiveness between schools using pupil attainment as the main performance criterion.

Some of the concerns about validity stemmed from analytical techniques used. Coleman (1966) used multiple regression analysis to discern the explanatory powers of the variables under investigation, which included inter alia, teacher attributes and community related variables. He found that teacher variables had little explanatory power. Bowles & Levin (1968) analysed the Coleman data using the education production function and found that teacher variables had rather strong explanatory powers, refuting Coleman's findings.

Until recently, there was difficulty in isolating the factors that contributed to effective schools at different levels, since they are all interrelated. Now, multi-level modelling aggregates the effects of different variables. This enables the effects of variables at the different levels (student, class and school) to be isolated and desegregated (Riddell, 1988).

While multi-level sampling addresses the methodological issue, it may still be problematical. Reynolds (1994) argued that using such techniques problematise the earlier findings. He points to the "size of school effect" which shows that effectiveness accounts for only 8-15% of variations in pupils' achievements, suggesting that earlier beliefs were misplaced.

Elliott (1996) rejected the theoretical assumptions underlying school effectiveness research. Speaking for those he described as school researchers, he said:

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*should be described independently of such processes (Elliott, 1996:200).*

The validity of the school effectiveness research continues to be a matter of fierce debate. Studies using these methods give different explanatory powers to the same variables. As Hill & Rowe (1996) pointed out:

*parameter estimates and their standard errors. (Hill & Rowe, 1996:2)*

While most of the research on school effectiveness has been carried out in industrialised countries, an increasing number of studies are being carried out in developing countries. (Vulliamy, 1987; Riddell, 1988, Lockheed and Vespoor, 1991; Fuller & Clarke 1994). These studies except Riddell (1988), suggest that different sets of factors account for pupil attainment in developing countries. The results from developing countries suggest that the factors that influence effective schools in industrialised and developing countries are different, and that in developing countries, socio-economic and pupil background were less important determinants of attainment than school factors, the complete opposite of the results in industrialised countries.

Fuller & Clarke (1994) found that school input variables such as the availability of textbooks, supplementary material and teacher qualities, while rarely helping to explain variations in pupil achievement in the Europe (Hanushek, 1989) had great explanatory powers in developing countries. That school-based factors are more important in explaining variations in pupil achievement has almost become the conventional wisdom. However, this dominant view of school effectiveness in developing countries is being challenged by different methodologies. Using multi-level regression model of school effectiveness research Riddell (1988) found the major influences on pupil achievement in Zimbabwe was accounted for by pupils' previous attainment and socio-economic background.

SER has also had an effect on education policy in general and the role of the principal in particular. The role of the principal and their impact on school improvement has also been subject to extensive research by the school effectiveness movement. Much of the literature suggests that principals (and teachers by association) do make a difference and policy makers have latched onto this as justification for policy and reform. As Hallinger put it:

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*debate. (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994:208).*

Much of the early research supported this proposition. Thus, Leithwood & Montgomery (1994) found that principals have a positive impact on a variety of student and teacher variables. Eberts & Stone (1988), using the educational production function, found principal behaviour to have a significant influence on individual student achievement. This belief has led to policies that emphasise the role of the school and head teacher in particular in the education process.

Outson (1999) outlines the impact of SER on policy.

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*has become one with good exam results (Ouston, 1999:170)*

Another result of this movement has been that governments have been able to shift responsibility for failing schools away from themselves onto the teachers. If education is to be seen in its wider context and not just as passing examinations, then SER fails to take into account qualitative learning such as social cohesion, international understanding and national identity- all very important features of civil life.

#### **6.10.7.2 The Adoption of School Effectiveness Principles in St. Lucia.**

SER has been a major influence on education policy in St. Lucia. In light of SER, 12 features of effective schools were selected for embedding in all schools as a major strategy for school improvement.

1. *The school's philosophy and goals*
2. *co-ordination and instruction*
3. *staff relations and welfare*
4. *staff development efforts*
5. *induction of new staff*
6. *school climate, student discipline and welfare.*
7. *homework policy*
8. *student handwriting*
9. *co-ordination with feeder schools*

10. *record keeping*
  11. *school's effort at enhancing the physical plant*
  12. *Community relationship*
- (St. Lucia, Ministry of Education 1990:25)

The decision was based on the belief that schools do make a difference.

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*the necessary support and guidance, and that in general, parents wish their children to receive the best possible education. (St. Lucia, Ministry of Education, Proposal for School Performance Review, 1994: 26.)*

The selected features are a combination of those characteristics identified by Rutter et al (1979), Purkey & Smith (1983) and Mortimore (1988) with some adaptation to reflect local needs and conditions. However, on closer examination of the list, it can hardly be described as characteristics of effective schools. It appears to consist of a set of principles that even conventional wisdom alone would suggest, are important for the effective management of schools.

The problem does not appear to be the factors per se, but rather, how a set of mechanistic features is to be translated into a dynamic process linked to attainment. Moreover, while some factors may be associated with effective schools, they may not necessarily cause schools to be effective, and developing or embedding these features does not guarantee that a school will be effective. This also assumes that there is a consensus on what schools should be trying to achieve, which is not always the case. Further, indicators of effectiveness could be both an outcome and a factor. For instance, good management is not a goal in itself, but a means for achieving school objectives, whatever they might be.

The concern is that school effectiveness research is being used as a basis for policy making, even if its conclusions are not substantiated by research evidence, and its processes little understood in St. Lucia. The greatest concern of all is that there is

great reliance on this strategy to improve performance, which could lead to great disappointment.

A further possible effect is that in the event of failure, schools will begin to get the blame for poor performance. This will be a major attitudinal and positional change, because the prevailing view is that pupil indiscipline, lack of motivation and parental support are responsible for poor performance.

## **6.11 The Challenges of Educational Management and Administration**

The problems of educational management and administration in St. Lucia was aptly reflected in the report of 11th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers held in Barbados in 1990, which acknowledged the role of good management.

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*achieve but necessary (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1991:19).*

Perceived weaknesses in current administrative practices can be inferred from the OECS Education Reform Strategy.

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*participation will be counter-productive. (OECS 1991:89)*

The Ministry of Education in St. Lucia has acknowledged the problems of educational administration. Its draft policy statement for 1988/89 stated:

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*the Ministry intends to institute a Certificate of Education programme to supplement the UWIDITE<sup>21</sup> programme offered by UWI. (St. Lucia, Ministry of Education, 1988:2)*



In a case study on the organisation of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour, Fredericks<sup>22</sup> (1991), commenting on the training of senior officers observed:

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*specialised (Fredericks, 1991:75).*

There is a strong temptation to suggest that complacency. It could very well be that given the emphasis on academic training in St. Lucia, it is assumed that academic training equips staff to undertake any job role and that the issue of occupationally or job related training are not very important. This may also reflect the tendency for officials in small states to be generalists rather than specialists.

### **6.12. Human Resource Development.**

The human resource problems that typify in the Caribbean also pertain to St. Lucia. It is not just that people who are sent overseas to train fail to return, but also, many of those who emigrate have been trained in the Caribbean. More worryingly, it is those trained in high skilled occupations such as engineers, scientists and doctors who tend to migrate. The West Indian Commission Report (1992) estimated that the number of people trained in the Caribbean and working in the medical field in the United States alone ran into hundreds. Yet, there is an acute shortage of medical doctors in the region.

Governments have used different strategies to secure skilled personnel needed to drive the development process. In the immediate postcolonial era, expatriates filled most of the specialised posts. Some were filled by direct recruitment but most of them via technical assistance from international agencies or bilateral aid arrangements.

These strategies bring their own set of problems. Employing nationals who have emigrated present difficulties, because it is seen very much as depriving locals of some of the more prestigious jobs. The presence of expatriates in these jobs also

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21 UWIDITE - University of the West Indies Distance Teaching Experiment.

22 Fredericks is the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour. His contribution was incorporated into book by Mark Bray (1991) entitled *Ministries of Education in*

creates a certain amount of resentment in countries just emerging from colonialism and this is seen by many as a continuation of foreign domination and influence.

The lack of qualified and trained staff is regarded as a problem, not only in educational management and administration, but also in all sectors of the economy. This rather complex human resource issue is generally presented in a simplified way, which can be misleading. The general impression given is that, the countries concerned are incapable of producing the qualified and trained personnel required but this far from the truth.

St. Lucia has produced an abundance of people who are highly qualified academically with post-graduate qualifications, but the problem is retaining them<sup>23</sup>.

A major cause of the shortage of high level and talented staff is due to the 'brain drain'. This refers to the phenomenon, whereby talented and highly skilled people from the developing countries migrate to developed countries; thus depriving their native countries of much needed skills. This has become a particular problem for developing countries since independence, when they assumed responsibility for development, which needed trained people.

The factors responsible for the 'brain drain' in the Caribbean have been summarised thus:

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(Bodhoo & Baksh, 1981)

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Small States

23 It worth noting that in that St. Lucia produced two Nobel Laureates in just over a decade: Sir Arthur Lewis for Economics and Derek Walcott in Creative Literature.

While the 'brain drain' is a feature of developing countries generally, its effect is much more pronounced in small states because of the additional problem of limited absorptive capacity.

The human resource problem is further exacerbated by the existing supply gaps at the graduate level. The West Indian Commission Report (1992) noted that, at current levels of output of graduates from the University of the West Indies, it would take at best five years and at worst over 30 years to achieve a one percent increase in the proportion of technologists and technicians in the labour force. Surveys of the projected demand for graduates from the private sector indicate demand of the order of 4,800 to 7,200 graduates per annum over the period. The region produces a total of approximately 4000 graduates some 1,600 of whom are expected to emigrate. When the public sector demand is added to these figures, the outlook looks very bleak indeed.

### **6.13 The Training of Educational Administrators**

Although a wide range of courses in educational administration and management is available at the University of the West Indies and many administrators from St. Lucia train overseas; there is still an absence of a cadre of managers with much needed skills to drive forward educational development programmes.

In 1992, in an interview with *The Courier*<sup>22</sup>, the then Prime Minister of St. Lucia, John Compton, responding to a question about the difficulty young entrepreneurs faced in getting access to credit acknowledged:

TEXT REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES *The*  
*rt of*  
*major*  
*drawbacks, which applies both to government and to the private sector. (The*  
*Courier, Nov-Dec 1994:31).*

With regard to solutions, he thought that the problem would be solved by accumulation of experience.

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*must be "home-grown" but it takes time for this to happen. (The Courier, Nov-Dec 1994: 31)*

While the diagnosis sounds plausible, the proposed solutions are less convincing. It is crucial that not only the middle managers, but also the top echelon is home grown as part of local capacity building.

The recruitment of educational administrators in small states also presents its own problems. As Bray (1991a) noted:

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*apart as Botswana and Solomon Islands. (Bray, 1991a: 75)*

This raises several critical issues in respect of the preparation of educational administrators in the region. One of the main issues is the selection of educational administrators. The practice or tradition has been to appoint educational administrators from the ranks of teachers; based on the assumption that successful teachers make good educational administrators. There is a need to find ways of identifying those individuals both within and without the education system who have the ability and potential to become effective educational administrators.

The content of training programmes as well as the training methods and strategies are important issues. If administrators are to be selected on their ability and potential to become effective administrators, then the skills, knowledge, understanding and competence needed for effective management will have to be identified.

## 6.14 Policy Reforms

This section highlights the major policy reforms aimed at improving the management and administration of the education system in St. Lucia.

Some of the policies highlighted are considered in detail in the following two chapters that report the findings from the field research.

### 6.14.1. The OECS Education Reform Strategy

The OECS Education Reform Strategy (OERS) was the result of a report commissioned by the Ministers of Education at only their 4th Annual Conference in 1990 in Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Ministers accepted the report in principle and further consultations took place to identify national priorities within the broad framework.

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*states. (OECS, Education Reform Strategy, 1994)*

The reforms involved twelve ambitious projects. They span the broad spectrum of educational priorities including, school plant, teacher training, management training and curriculum development. The reform is expected to achieve greater integration, pooling of resources and harmonisation of education in the member states.

### 6.14.2 Basic Education Reform Project

St. Lucia has just begun implementing a Basic Education Project in 1995, arising from the OECS Education Reform Strategy.

The project comprises three major components: *A Sector Planning and Institutional Strengthening Component, A Qualitative Improvement of Basic Education Component and An Expansion of Access to Schools Component.* Together, these components are expected to focus on key areas such as general administration, teacher training, curriculum development, and production of educational materials, educational measurement and testing and school supervision. The project is expected to achieve

several critical outcomes including, inter alia, long-term sector development plan, an integrated education data system, established project management capacity, better quality teaching and learning, improved curricula, measurement and testing capability, increase secondary school places.

#### **6.14.3 Teacher Training**

The reforms in teacher training have involved several key areas. They include attempts to recruit better-qualified teachers, attracting sufficient numbers of qualified teachers, increasing the proportion of trained teachers, providing ongoing staff development and improving the quality of teacher education.

The major reform has involved phasing out the pupil-teacher system. Teachers had traditionally been recruited from the 'all age' or combined schools, from among those who passed the Standard Six School Leaving Examinations. The expansion of secondary education and has resulted in increasing numbers of candidates with CXC's and A levels has resulted in an increase in the number of better qualified recruits for teaching.

Other improvements to teacher education have included a "mass upgrading" programme, which provides training for long-serving teachers who have not been teacher trained.

#### **6.14.4 School Governance**

A major reform in school management has been the setting up of Boards of Management for secondary schools.

The Board is largely advisory with the Chair reporting directly to the Minister of Education .The membership of the Board comprises: the principal, ministry official, private sector representative, student representative and community representatives all appointed by the Minister of Education.

#### **6.14.5 Secondary Education**

The reform started with the introduction of junior secondary schools in 1973, but the expansion in junior secondary school places was not accompanied by a simultaneous expansion in senior secondary places. Consequently, bottlenecks develop in access to senior secondary education. No new junior secondary are being built, and existing ones have all been upgraded to senior secondary status.

#### **6.14.6 Further, Technical and Vocational Education**

Tertiary level educational provision in St. Lucia has also been subject to extensive and radical reforms.

The early seventies saw the establishment of the Morne Educational Complex, incorporating the existing Teachers' Training College, the newly established Morne Technical College and the "A" Level College to which all "A" level work was transferred from the 3 existing secondary schools. This culminated in the greatest reform of all: the establishment of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

#### **6.14.7 Curricula Reforms**

The major curriculum reform has been the establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) of which St. Lucia is a participating member. This effectively gave local control over the content of the curriculum and assessment strategies with CXC examinations replacing the GCE examinations of UK examining bodies, but there is still reliance on UK A levels and vocational qualifications.

There have also been major reforms in agricultural education. The syllabus has been reformed to include a greater scientific basis as a means of improving the tawdry and gardening image of agriculture. The subject is now taught in most primary schools and all secondary schools that now teach it up to CXC level.

The flagship curriculum development initiative is CAMDU (Curriculum and Materials Development Unit). The unit develops and pilots materials to be used in schools in several curriculum areas, with emphasis on Language Arts, the Sciences and Social Studies.

The initiative has provided greater curriculum relevance affordable materials and staff to publish textbooks.

#### **6.14.8 School Effectiveness Principles**

The adoption of policy based on SER was discussed earlier in this chapter (Section 6.110.6.3). The policy decision was to select 12 features of effective schools to be embedded in all schools as a means of achieving improvement in the performance of schools.

#### **6.14.9 School Performance Review**

A system of School Performance Review was introduced in 1990, to monitor the performance of schools and to identify failing schools. This filled a void in the assessment of the performance of schools that had existed since the 1960s, when the system of one-day summative assessments by school inspectors was abolished.

The current system was developed after a review of the literature of effective schools. Although the review acknowledged the weaknesses of the effective schools research, the conclusion was that it offered a way forward and a model of evaluating the education system.

The review process involves assessing the performance of schools against criteria associated with effective schools. It is conducted in one day by a team of Ministry officials, usually led by the Chief Education Officer. It takes the form of meetings with staff, talking to pupils, inspecting school records and observing the operation of several school activities, which may or may not include classroom observations. A written report and action plan is produced at the end of the review. Some 10 schools are reviewed each year.

#### **6.14.10 Decentralisation**

St. Lucia implemented a programme of decentralisation of public services and the establishment of school districts, as key policy initiatives. These are examined in Chapters 7 and 8.



## **6.15 Conclusions**

The development of mass education in St. Lucia followed the basic pattern of other former colonies, especially those in which there was strong Roman Catholic influence.

While there have been many reforms, the organisation and structure of the education system has not changed in any significant way from the models inherited from the colonial era.

A disproportionate amount of the education budget is devoted to secondary and tertiary education at the expense of primary education. This imbalance may have to be redressed, if improvements are to be achieved in the quality of basic education and the standards and quality of students entering secondary school.

While there has been much needed reforms in introducing curriculum relevance, the secondary school programme is still highly academic and unsuited to many pupils. The selective nature of secondary education and the system of allocating pupils to secondary schools are divisive and elitist, widening the difference in performance between a few schools and the rest of the system. The senior primary school is an anomaly in system, which should be addressed urgently.

Providing universal secondary education is a major challenge for the government who is unlikely to have the resources to meet increasing demand for secondary education. Consideration will have to be given to alternative methods of secondary and tertiary education.

The education system is performing poorly at all levels, as measured by examinations. This suggests that there is an enormous task to improve performance, thus giving greater significance to policy formulation and implementation.

Educational dependence continues to permeate and influence all areas of educational development. This manifests itself in the type of training that takes place, their content and underlying assumptions.

A great deal of training in educational administration takes place, but has yet failed to produce the cadre of skilled managers required to drive forward the development process. The shortage of skilled personnel in critical areas is exacerbated by the 'brain drain', due in part, to the low absorptive capacity of these small economies. The solution to this problem remains elusive.

The colonial influence remains very strong and many vestiges of the colonial past are still in evidence in the education system.

International assistance and the policy of tied aid are not always benign. It can, and has led to the adoption of policies and practices that are inappropriate. It places severe restrictions on recipient countries, often preventing them from seeking best value for money outside the areas stipulated by the donors.

The continuing and increasing (in some cases) levels of dependence in education give cause for concern. Dependence remains particularly high at the tertiary level in curriculum areas such as A levels, textbooks, pedagogy and research, but there is some local control of the curriculum and examinations in respect of CXC examinations. It is unlikely that St. Lucia will be able to escape the impact of dependency in the foreseeable future. The resolution may have to be to manage the process to minimise the adverse effects of dependence.

Globalisation is beginning to have a profound impact on the economy in general and education in particular. Major rethinking needs to be done about the impact of the loss of preferential treatment for bananas, about the new economic strategy and its implications for education and training.

The regional response to the constraints of scale has been regional co-operation by pooling resources and setting up regional organisations to maximise any potential

economies of scale. This type of co-operation would need to extend to fully integrated structures for delivering some educational services such as teacher training as an example. However, there will be national and parochial resistance to overcome, which should not be underestimated.

The adoption of policies based on school effectiveness research is to be commended, in that it attempts to address the problem of performance, but it is fraught with difficulties. There is the problem of distinguishing cause and effect, complicated by the absence of any indicators or standards to measure performance. Further, there is also the problem of clarity and understanding the process by which features of effective schools are transformed into measurable outcomes of improved pupil and school performance.

*(Drucker, 1964)*

## CHAPTER 7

### **Educational Decentralisation in the Context of Small States**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This Chapter provides a critical examination of educational decentralisation in small states and applies the decentralisation paradigm to St. Lucia, to determine its appropriateness for small states and St. Lucia in particular.

The chapter begins with an international perspective on decentralisation, followed by an examination of the evidence from countries that have decentralised their education systems. The factors influencing decentralisation in small states are identified and applied to St. Lucia, to determine whether conditions favour decentralisation. The final section critically examines attempts at decentralisation in St. Lucia through the establishment of Regional Authorities and School Districts.

#### **7.2 An International Perspective**

Decentralisation has been a major subject of international educational administrative discourse for some considerable time. It has been part of the international trend of restructuring in education that began in the 1970s, became fashionable in the 1980s (Lawton, 1992). The trend continued in the 1990s and looks set to continue well into the new millennium.

The role of decentralisation in education has been described thus:

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*and research in strategic areas. (UNESCO, 1993:14).*

Haag (1982), in an international survey of the organisation and management of education systems found three problems that kept on recurring: lack of co-ordination, the difficulties with communication and the desire for decentralisation.

Some countries that had decentralised their education systems were clear about the purpose. Sweden's policy was explained thus:

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*consequently improve educational success (Haag, 1982:43).*

Cyprus, one of the few small states surveyed by Haag (1982) commented:

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*formulation of education policy. (Haag, 1982:46).*

Brown (1990) argued that decentralisation was essential if schools are to take advantage of the progress made in the field learning. He suggested that:

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*students to learn. (Cited in Mankoe & Maynes, 1994:23)*

It is clear that there is widespread support for decentralisation and many countries consider decentralisation as a development strategy, which is actively promoted by international organisations such as UNESCO and the World Bank for many years. (Berman, 1990; Samoff, 1993). But, what does decentralisation really mean? What are the arguments in favour and does the evidence justify its widespread adoption in educational administration.

### 7.3 The Meaning of Decentralisation

Rondinelli (1983) provide a concise definition of decentralisation:

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*or voluntary organisations. (Rondinelli, 1981:134)*

Decentralisation can take several forms, three of which are generally recognised.

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*deconcentration level. (UNICEF, 1993:5).*

The meaning of decentralisation can be quite vague and varied. In practice, it could refer to several different structures, processes and varying degrees of powers of decision-making.

However, what often obtains in practice is a mixture of the different forms of decentralisation, as no country strictly conforms to any form decentralisation.

The different forms of decentralisation suggest that it could be construed as being along a continuum, from deconcentration at one extreme to devolution at the other. Consequently, it should be possible to locate a country along the continuum according to their degree of decentralisation.

#### **7.4 The Arguments for Decentralisation**

Decentralisation has become a major battle cry for those calling for administrative reforms and has received a great deal of attention from scholars and practitioners alike. (Lauglo & Mc Lean 1985; Bray 1984; McGinn & Street 1986). As Weiler (1990) put it.

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*decentralised models. (Weiler, 1990:4).*

The arguments in of decentralisation are well documented in the literature. (Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983; Rondinelli, Nellis & Cheema, 1984; Malpica & Rakeesh; Conyers 1984; Lauglo & McLean, 1985. Lauglo (1985) summarised the arguments thus:

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*1995:9).*

*ales for  
prity, the  
(Lauglo,*

Weiler (1990) grouped the arguments under three broad categories (a) educational finance, (b) efficiency and effectiveness and (c) redistribution of political power.

Prawda (1993) saw decentralisation in education as attempting to achieve three main objectives: (a) improving educational finance, efficiency and quality of the system (b) redistributing political power and (c) promoting stability in the system.

Most of these arguments could be categorised under three broad headings: the efficiency argument, redistribution of political power and improving educational finance. These are examined below.

#### **7.4.1 The Efficiency Argument**

This argument is about the extent to which scarce resources are optimised in education. It is based on the belief that decentralisation will bring increased efficiency in the use of resources.

This claim involves two sets of expectations:

- (a) *That greater decentralisation will mobilise and generate resources that are not available under centralised conditions*
- (b) *That decentralised systems can utilise available resources more efficiently (Weiler, 1990:437).*

It is generally argued that decentralisation will enable local needs to be better met. It is also thought that at the local level, differences in prevailing conditions such as resources and geography may require some sort of decision-making at local level, and that encouraging diversity in approach to educational issues might result in innovation and creativity and enable different strategies to be assessed.

Another argument for decentralisation is that it can speed up decision making, since many decisions can now be taken at local level, without having to be referred to a centre, which may be extremely remote from the local area.

#### **7.4.2 Redistribution of Political Power Argument**

This argument has to do with the sharing of political power. Although governments hardly state the sharing of political power as a motive for decentralisation, it nevertheless underpins many such initiatives, with democratisation an inherent part of the process. McGinn & Street (1986) argued that the redistribution of political power is the primary objective of decentralisation. Decentralisation in Papua New Guinea and Nigeria was thought to be driven largely by political motives to appease those demanding greater regional autonomy. (Standish, 1983; Bray, 1984; Packer, 1984).



The political rationale is also concerned with ways of maintaining political power and influence or diffusing political opposition. Weiler (1990) referred to this practice as "conflict management" and "compensating legitimacy". He argued that the state faces certain challenges to its legitimacy and sees decentralisation as a strategy for diffusing opposition and maintaining its legitimacy and control.

#### **7.4.3 The Financial Argument**

This argument is concerned with how finance is raised for education. It is argued that as education has expanded and enrolments risen, governments have encountered fiscal problems and find it more difficult and sometimes, unable to maintain expenditure on education. Consequently, they have sought alternative means of financing education. This has usually meant shifting the burden and responsibility for financing education from central government to some type of sub-national unit or agency.

The case for decentralising finance is based on the belief that involving a wider range of bodies and institutions in education will provide access to resources to which it previously had no access, thus making additional resources available.

### **7.5 Experiences of Educational Decentralisation**

Countries all over the world have been decentralising their education systems. In the West, they include United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and USA (Lawton, 1992; Whitty, 1998). In Latin America, Africa and the Far East have also been decentralising their education systems. (UNICEF, 1993). Peru established regional directorates of education in 1972 to cater for disadvantaged and marginalized. Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Mexico have all pursued policies of decentralisation in education. (Prawda, 1993). In Africa, Nigeria established local government to provide primary education in 1977, Tanzania, Zambia and Ghana have all decentralised their education systems. (Conyers, 1981; Lillis, 1992; Mankoe & Maynes, 1994). The Philippines decentralised in 1974 and Papua New Guinea decentralised its education system immediately after independence from Australia in 1975.

While there has been no large-scale decentralisation in the Caribbean, there have been attempts encourage community participation in educational decision-making. However, there have been no evaluations of these attempts.

Jamaica has a system of regionalised decentralisation on 6 regional offices. These regional offices have the power to confirm teacher appointments and grant leave facilities. They also provide a professional support to teachers. Each secondary school also has a Board of Management with a membership drawn from the local community and government officials. The Boards of Management allocate subvention funds from central government, allocates any additional funds raised as it sees fit, make recommendations on the appointment and deployment of teachers and administrative staff. At the national level, there is a National Education Council with wide ranging functions that include: provision of multi-sectoral, non-partisan support and planning, training Boards of management, monitoring and evaluation of education programmes at national and regional levels and managing funds from the National Education Trust.

Guyana has a system of Regional Councils, which has responsibility for education. The Regional Councils supervise regional education officers, teachers and control the budget for school construction and maintenance. The Ministry of Education controls all instructional & curriculum matters, and the appointment of staff.

Barbados has district education officers who supervise the schools in a district. They are appointed by the Public Service Commission and operate directly from the Ministry of Education. Some of the central administrative functions have been devolved to schools through the Boards of Management that have been set up for secondary and tertiary institutions. The Boards have decisions making powers in terms of budgeting and finance and maintenance of school buildings.

St. Lucia has school districts that are overseen by education officers, some of whom have their offices located in the district they supervise. Secondary schools have

Boards of Management drawn from government officials, business and community representatives, but these boards are purely advisory and have no powers.

These initiatives demonstrate a trend towards pushing responsibility further down the line, suggesting a move towards some form of decentralisation.

## **7.6 The Effectiveness of Decentralisation**

The evidence of the effectiveness of decentralisation is inconclusive. In Papua New Guinea, decentralisation was found to have resulted in unhappy outcomes (Standish, 1983). McGinn (1997) concluded from research evidence that, it was difficult to find any major changes in education, primary, secondary or tertiary level, which could be attributed to decentralisation.

It is also significant that changes resulting from decentralisation have been in the governance of education, and not in its content and delivery. One hypothesis advanced for the lack of impact of decentralisation on education is that there has been very little real decentralisation, because the critical aspects of education: finance and curriculum remain centrally controlled (Carter & O'Neill, 1995).

The difficulty in finding firm supporting evidence about the effects of decentralisation led Sander & Murphy to remark:

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*argue that in many cases there is evidence to the contrary. (Sander & Murphy, 1989:17).*

In a detailed study of educational decentralisation in five countries, Whitty, Power and Halpin, (1998) concluded that there were insufficient grounds to claim that self-managing schools were currently enhancing student attainment, although there was evidence to suggest that self management had improved certain school processes, there was considerable ambiguity about how or whether these have positive

consequences for student attainment. Other writers (Levacic, 1995; Thomas & Martin, 1996) also concluded that there was little evidence to suggest that self-management had led to significant changes or improvements in the approaches to teaching and learning. These findings are critical because the quality of the interface between teacher and learner must be a critical factor in pupil performance.

There is no conclusive evidence about the effectiveness of educational decentralisation in developing countries despite its long history (Yannakapulos, 1990; Prawda, 1993; UNICEF 1993). This is due to several reasons not least, the effects of decentralisation on education outcomes are difficult to predict and measure the lack of clear policy goals and the political nature of evaluation itself.

The evaluation process is further compounded by its political nature. Weiler argued that:

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*knowledge is by no means all that evaluation is about. (Weiler, 1990:444).*

This also extends to the interpretation of evaluations against standards. Weiler (1990) further argued, that evaluation can become an obvious and major instrument of control and intervention and can be used as authoritative sources to justify policies.

While it is not being suggested that the issue of legitimisation preoccupies the mind of the evaluator, the potential is there and it should be recognised that evaluation is not strictly descriptive, technical and neutral. (Weiler, 1990).

Prawda (1993) evaluated the effectiveness of educational decentralisation in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Columbia). The results were mixed. He found discrepancies between what educational policy makers preached and what was practised through decentralisation. He found that the quality of education did not improve and the gap between the better off and the worse off had increased but that there were some improvements in efficiency.

Mankoe and Maynes (1994), in one of the few detailed assessments of the effectiveness of educational decentralisation, concluded that the key stakeholders in Ghana may not have felt the levels of empowerment and ownership, which the literature links with the benefits of decentralisation.

### **7.7. Measuring Educational Decentralisation.**

One of the difficulties in evaluating educational decentralisation stems from the absence of any indicators to measure it. Although frameworks and approaches have been developed (Winkler, 1989; Mankoe & Maynes, 1994; Shape, 1994; OECD, 1995), they fall well short of being measuring instruments.

Winkler (1989) provided economic criteria for measuring the effects of decentralisation. He identified what he considered the key components of education services and introduced a decentralisation-centralisation topology for public education. He identified the locus of decision making in respect of each component of the education service, under three types of systems: a centralised system, mixed system and decentralised system. Under the system, the level of decentralisation would depend on the locus of major decisions in such areas as pedagogy, finance, examinations & assessment and school organisation and structure. This enabled Winkler to identify the locus of decision making to build the centralisation-decentralisation topology in Table 9.

Mankoe & Maynes (1994) examined the implementation of Ghana's educational decentralisation programme. They investigated the extent to which relevant stakeholders perceived there to be a match between their actual and preferred involvement in educational decision making at the schools level. They selected 22 decision areas and grouped them under five headings: Resources, Internal Organisation, External Organisation, Macro-Organisation and Pedagogy. Given that these areas are regarded as the main locus of decision making, then the extent to which the community felt involved in those decisions, were taken as a proxy for the degree and effectiveness of the decentralisation process.

While these analyses provide some indication, albeit qualitative, the number of decision making areas in which the community is involved, cannot just be aggregated and conclude that where the greater the number of areas in which the community participate, indicates a greater degree of decentralisation. This is because the areas will vary in their importance and impact on the operation of schools.

From these approaches, five areas emerge as being both common and critical to the determination of the degree of centralisation-decentralisation for education system as shown in Table 8, which has been adapted from Winkler's (1989) model. Pedagogy, School Organisation and Structure, Examinations and Supervision, Finance, Teacher Recruitment and Remuneration and School Construction & Repairs. These can be used as a template for categorising education systems according to their degree of decentralisation.

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*(Adapted from Winkler, 1989)*

## 7.8 The Locus Decision-Making in St. Lucia.

The topography of educational decision-making in St. Lucia is shown in Table 9. The striking feature of this matrix is that the education system displays the features associated with a centralised system, providing further evidence of the centralised nature of the system.

**Table 9. Topography of Decision Making in the Education System in St. Lucia**

	<b>Locus of Decisions</b>	<b>Type of system associated with locus of decision making</b>
<b>Pedagogy</b>	The curriculum and textbooks are determined centrally by education officers at the Ministry of education	Centralised
<b>School Organisation and Structure</b>	The structure of the school system including starting and leaving ages, methods of selection, allocation of places and management structures decided centrally	Centralised
<b>Examination &amp; Supervision</b>	School examinations, teacher appraisals are all performed centrally.	Centralised
<b>Finance</b>	The entire education budget is met centrally including teachers' salaries, equipment, materials and repairs. Even materials and essential equipment are supplied centrally to primary schools.	Centralised
<b>Teacher Recruitment &amp; Remuneration</b>	Teachers are recruited centrally by the Teaching Service Commission, paid on national pay scales, and teacher training is recruited and controlled by the Ministry of Education	Centralised
<b>School Construction and Repairs</b>	Central government controls school construction, maintenance and repairs. There is a central technical division within the Ministry of Education dealing with those matters.  The technical division sets the standards for specifications and oversees construction programmes  It also has the responsibility for deciding and prioritising school repairs and maintenance, which is often subcontracted	Centralised

The locus of decision-making in St. Lucia is examined further, to provide a better understanding of the links and powers of the different tiers within the education, to establish the degree of centralisation to provide further evidence of the centralised nature of decision-making in education. (Table 10). The decision-making powers are



shown at four different tiers, and the church (in relation to denominational primary schools) in respect of 20 key decision areas. Where the Ministry is involved in a decision, it takes the decision, sometimes in consultation with the other parties identified, but the Ministry invariably has the power of veto. For example, in the case of textbooks, the Ministry decides on the textbooks that are to be used, in consultation with schools.

Table 10 also shows several striking features. One of the most striking features is that the Ministry of Education is involved in all but one of the decisions. The other striking feature is that the Regional Council, the second tier body takes no decisions and has virtually no involvement in education. Limited powers exist at the School District level, which is effectively the Education Officer. In addition, even where limited powers exist, they are exercised by both the school manager (Parish Priest) and district education officer, which can lead to confusion and uncertainty.

This suggests a contradiction, if not a paradoxical situation regarding decentralisation. The authorities claim to be decentralising by establishing regional authorities and education districts, yet the evidence suggests that the system is highly controlled from the centre. This may be a good example of ‘decentralised control’.

**Table 10. Locus of Decision Areas in St. Lucia.**

<b>Decision Areas</b>	<b>Ministry of Education</b>	<b>Regional Council</b>	<b>School District</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Church</b>
Appointment of teachers	•			•	•
Appointment of principals	•				•
Staff discipline	•		•	•	•
Time off for staff			•	•	•
Student discipline	•			•	•
Number of sessions taught by teachers	•				
School performance appraisal	•				
Staff appraisal				•	
Teacher salaries	•				
Equipment and materials	•			•	•
Curriculum	•			•	
Examinations/testing	•				
Textbooks	•			•	
Staff development	•		•	•	
School plant	•				•
Provision of furniture	•			•	•
Student admission primary	•			•	
Student admission secondary	•				
Allocation of funds	•				
Repairs and maintenance	•			•	•

This shows unsurprisingly, that the education system is strongly controlled from the centre, which does not support the literature emerging from St. Lucia suggesting that progress is being made towards decentralisation.

## **7.9 Decentralisation in Small States**

There are hardly any studies of educational decentralisation in small states, which is not surprising because the perceived wisdom, common sense and logic would suggest that decentralisation was not appropriate in small states. However, St. Lucia is implementing a major decentralisation programme, which appears contrary to the general trend in small states.

Against this background, and an examination of the literature on decentralisation, four factors emerge as influencing decentralisation in small states: (1) Size and Isolation, (2) Socio-Political Factors (3) Resources, (4) Development Strategy & Public Administration.

Dependence was shown to be a major factor influencing education policy and practice (Chapter 6) and will not be examined again. However, the earlier conclusion that smaller states are more dependent and thus, more vulnerable to external influences, also holds for decentralisation.

### **7.9.1 Size and Isolation**

Small states by definition have small populations and land area. Their administrative systems including Ministries of Education are also very small. In 1991, the total number of staff employed in the Ministries of Education in Barbados and the Maldives 161 and 74 respectively. The number of staff employed centrally by the Ministry of Education St. Lucia in 1994 was 149. From a management perspective, these small systems grow very slowly and are unlikely to become so large as to render them unwieldy and unmanageable to generate internal pressures to decentralise. Smallness could also mean that the absolute sizes of administrative units might be too small to benefit from economies of scale.

The geographical distribution of the population is a factor influencing decentralisation. The major consideration is whether the population is widely scattered over relatively large areas such as Guyana and Botswana, scattered over many islands as in archipelago states such as the Bahamas, Papua New Guinea and the Maldives, or relatively compact states like St. Lucia, Barbados and Antigua. As Bacchus (1990b) noted:

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*centralised system. (Bacchus, 1990b: 1)*

It follows therefore, that the more scattered the population, the greater pressures there will be for decentralisation as communities strive to make education more relevant to their local needs. Decentralising certain functions may be necessary, just to administer the system. Conversely, the more compact is the state, the fewer pressures there will be for decentralisation. Compactness especially where accompanied by good infrastructure and communication would ease the administrative burden and make it easier to manage from the centre, reducing the need and desirability for local autonomy.

The education system in St. Lucia is relatively small. The size of the entire education system (staff, pupils and number of schools) is smaller than some local authorities in the United Kingdom. St. Lucia has 105 schools of which, approximately 52,000 pupils and 1168 teachers. The size of the education system would suggest that it is too small to contemplate certain forms of decentralisation, especially devolution and delegation. Bray (1991a) recognised this limitation in relation to Barbados.

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*government with attendant educational personnel. (Bray, 1991a: 109.)*

This applies equally to St. Lucia, which has larger area but smaller in population compared to Barbados.

St. Lucia does not have a scattered and isolated population as found in archipelago and small continental states. The island is quite compact, with relatively good infrastructure and communication and all communities are accessible. No community is more than about two hours drive from the capital and most places can be reached within an hour.

Another argument advanced for decentralisation is that it provides local expertise and foci that enable better decisions to be made. Inherent in this argument, is the assumption that there is a high degree of heterogeneity and diversification warranting a local focus.

The island is arguably, homogeneous for the purposes of the education and training. The economy is based mainly on agriculture (banana production mainly), tourism and light manufacturing. The hotels are concentrated in the North of the island with other developments in the South and West. Light industrial manufacturing is located in different parts of the island, with the heavier concentrations located in the main economic zones in the north and south of the island. Bananas are cultivated throughout the island.

St. Lucia is not sufficiently diverse to warrant a decentralised or localised focus on curriculum. Even in the very few instances where a local focus might be needed, it would not require decentralisation to make it happen. Moreover, even in centrally controlled education systems, there is scope for managerial discretion (Farrugia, 1992).

The small size of the island, its relative compactness and homogeneity all militate against decentralisation, especially the forms involving the setting up of regional or district level bodies or any additional tier of bureaucracy with personnel and powers of decision making.

### **7.9.2 Socio-Political Factors**

The closely-knit nature of some small state societies and the multiplex nature of relationships, are important factors affecting decentralisation.

In isolated communities, community bonding becomes very strong and causes parochialism and nepotism even. This is particularly so where the communities are based on cultural, racial or religious identities. These factors increase pressures towards local autonomy as in Papua New Guinea (Standish, 1983; Bray, 1985).

The prevailing attitude in isolated and closely-knit communities, is that local people and family or kin should have preference to others for jobs, even if they are not the best suited. If communities feel that they are not having a fair share of jobs or services or feel that they are not well served, there is likely to be greater demands for control of education and other services. These conditions would therefore favour decentralisation.

A feature of political life in small states is that politicians want to be seen by their constituencies as initiating development projects in their areas so that they can get the credit, and hopefully re-elected. Consequently, they remain close to their constituencies, intermingle, and move quite freely within their communities, and are generally easily accessible. These contacts are used as sources of information about local issues, which could influence policy.

The decision makers in small states and politicians in particular, tend to resist the establishment of any structures that they think would distance them from what is happening on the ground, and would prevent them from receiving personal praise and credit from the electorate. Politicians and senior officials alike would view decentralisation and school empowerment in particular, as imposing unnecessary barriers that they would resist it, not least, because they would have most to lose. Moreover, there is a tendency towards political authoritarianism in the postcolonial Caribbean State, which militates against decentralisation. (Henry, 1990; Thomas, 1996)

### **7.9.3. Resources: human and financial**

Small size also implies a narrow resource base: financial and human. The level and quantity of trained expertise available locally is a major factor in the decision to decentralise.

It was argued earlier, that the availability of adequately trained staff was a prerequisite for successful decentralisation. Not only is this a prerequisite for the successful implementation of any decentralisation programme, but also a very important factor that influences decentralisation. Given that decentralisation requires skilled people in educational management, the small human resource base of small states means that they are unlikely to have all the expertise needed. The specialised nature of the tasks to be decentralised would be another factor. Small states tend to employ generalists in education as opposed to specialists, so the more specialised the tasks, the less likely it is the chance of the expertise being available locally.

All small states face considerable financial constraints and are having to make harsh choices between alternative programmes. Spending more on any service usually means spending less on others. Given the higher costs of operating a decentralised system and the dubiousness of the potential benefits, decentralisation would not be on the list of priorities for small states. Financial constraints would therefore discourage moves towards a decentralised education system.

St. Lucia is not wealthy or well endowed with resources either financial or technical expertise. Generalists as opposed to specialists are employed in education. Where there is specialist staff, it is usually only one. For example, there is only one Education Officer, Planning and one Statistician. Consequently, it can be very difficult sometimes, for staff to get time off for study and professional development because there is no one else to do the job if, they were to be allowed time off.

There is specific evidence of the shortage of professional expertise in educational management and administration. St. Lucia is currently implementing a Basic

Education Reform Project with funds borrowed from the World Bank. It was a condition of the loan that they could not draw down the funds until an agreed number of staff had been trained in prescribed areas. In the 1995/96 academic year there were six officials studying in the United Kingdom as part of the project. All but one, are based at the Ministry of Education. If it is proving problematic to retain trained staff to manage the central administration, then the problem can only be compounded in a decentralised system.

Countries that have decentralised educational finance have managed to reduce the burden on central government, but there are questions about whether educational financing has improved (Prawda, 1993), besides exacerbating the problems of equity and access created.

It is difficult to see how the financial burden can be shifted from central government in St. Lucia. The resource base from which revenue can be raised is very narrow. The common measure to raise revenue has been by levying a local tax. However, in St. Lucia, not only is a diversified revenue base lacking but also, the amount that could be raised would be very small. Decentralisation also means having the powers to spend, which would necessitate developing appropriate infrastructure and systems to manage educational expenditure since they do not currently exist. There may also be questions about the capacity and availability of resources to do so.

Even a revived system of town councils would not have the capacity or ability to undertake this function. Moreover, the cost of developing and operating such systems is likely to be prohibitive.

Even if some finance could be raised through local taxation, it is unlikely to shift the burden from central government but likely to result in a reduction of tax receipts by central government. Any local taxation could hardly be an additional tax, and would have to replace some element of central taxation. Further, a local tax is likely to exacerbate the problem of tax evasion among farmers and agricultural workers most of whom are not subject to a PAYE system and many pay no income tax.



In theory, the relevant structures and mechanisms can always be put in place to undertake these functions. However, these would have implications, not only for education, but also for public administration as a whole. It would introduce what would almost certainly be an additional and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy, which would consume scarce resources and probably yield no additional benefits to education.

The other dimension to the financial argument in favour of decentralisation is that it would give the community greater access to resources. The experiences of countries that have decentralised show that education has benefited from additional resources (Bray, 1988; Mankoe & Mayes, 1994; Malpica, 1995).

There is some scope for mobilising community resources for educational projects in St. Lucia. Schools are already actively involved in raising funds for education projects through organisations such as PTA and other community development groups. The contribution in kind (free time and expertise) that local communities give to education, if costed, would amount to a considerable sum.

The prevailing view has been that business and other prominent members of the communities would make donations of cash, materials and voluntary service to school projects, if they felt that they were part of the decision making process in deciding how resources are to be used.

However, accessing resources from the local community or community financing education can be problematic, even where substantial funds have been raised. Many problems seem to stem from the lack of professional expertise in project planning and implementation resulting in many projects being abandoned, wasting valuable resources (Bray & Lillis, 1988).

St. Lucia does not therefore, have a sufficiently broad and varied income base to enable them to raise income locally to result in any significant shift in the burden

from central government. While there is some scope for accessing some local resources through donations and voluntary contributions, these cannot be relied upon to finance education.

The resource constraints: financial and human combined with the lack of opportunity for generating additional revenue to shift the burden from central government weigh against decentralisation.

#### **7.9.4 Development Strategy and Public Administration**

The development strategy being followed by small states can be a factor in influencing decentralisation of the education system. Demas (1965) argued that small states should specialise in a limited number of commodities for export. This has implications for educational planning, because it suggests that small countries should concentrate on training people for the narrow range of commodities that they produce. This being the case, governments would seek control over the educational system, especially the secondary and tertiary levels, to ensure that it responds to the human resource needs for economic development. This would necessitate a certain degree of central control.

In the Caribbean, the tendency has been for more centralisation in public services including education. Since independence, governments have taken greater control of education and the move was towards greater centralisation. This began at a time when governments were taking increased responsibility for matters of national development. This was recognised by the United Nations.

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*administration to overcome social and economic and deficiencies. (United Nations, 1967:5)*

This approach was very much in line with the "top down" approach to economic development that dominated economic thinking then, resulting in centralised planning as a mechanism for government to gain greater control of development. This practice was strengthened by the reluctance of ministers to delegate responsibilities and the general failure of central government to devolve any real authority and power to local governments. Mills (1990) described the situation in the Caribbean.

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*public accountability. (Mills, 1990:15).*

This approach was strengthened and supported by a strong system of ministerial government but rather weak local government. While most small states in the Caribbean have a history of local government (town and village councils mainly) they have never been actively involved in mainstream economic development or education. There is no history or strong tradition of community participation in education.

The strategy of development from above, the control of economic development and planning from the centre and the weak system of local government have all contributed to more centralised administration.

## **7.10 Decentralisation in St. Lucia:**

There have been two major programmes of decentralisation in St. Lucia. The Establishment of Regional Authorities and the setting up of School Districts.

### **7.10.1 Regional Authorities**

St. Lucia embarked upon a programme of decentralisation in 1985. The country was divided into eight regional authorities that would carry out a range of functions in the delivery of public services. These Regional Authorities were to operate alongside the

existing system of local government: Town Councils, Rural Councils, the City Council and the School Districts.

The Regional Authorities are quite small. The average population size of the regions is approximately 17,500, ranging from 8,000 to approximately 36,000. The average land area 77 Sq. Km or 30 Sq. miles.

Its aim was explained as follows:

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(Government of  
*St. Lucia, 1985:5)*

The rationale for setting up the regional authorities was also explained in the proposals:

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*Castries. (Government of St. Lucia, 1983:2)*

Each region was to be served by A Regional Council, a Regional Technical Co-ordinating Group, and a Regional Clerk and altogether would constitute a Regional Centre.

The membership of the Regional Councils would come from clubs, associations, town councils and rural council. The role of the Regional Council would be primarily to:

- discuss plans on how their Region should develop
- say what improvements are needed in their own communities
- advise on how these improvements should take place
- see that the projects and programmes are effective and advise the Government on all community affairs.

The Regional Technical Co-ordinating Committee would be composed of officials from the various Government Ministries working in the region, the Clerks of towns, villages and rural councils. Their main duties are to: plan, monitor and co-ordinate work programmes in the region

Each Regional Centre was to have a Regional Clerk to provide technical support to the different committees. There was also to be a Regional Co-ordinator, based in the Capital, whose main duty would be to help the Regional Councils.

Implementation proved to be problematic. Many of the structures were never set up. The Regional Councils, although set up in some areas never really were established and have thus, not been effective. Meetings were poorly attended and some authorities stopped meeting altogether. Even those that continued to meet still suffered from poor attendance. The Regional Technical Co-ordinating Committee was the only element of the decentralisation administration that continued to function, but this is largely because they are all government employees.

The warning from Da Costa should have been heeded. In a report on local government in St. Lucia, sponsored by the Organisation of American States (OAS), Da Costa warned:

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*being questioned. (Da Costa, 1984:1).*

Very few members of the St. Lucian public understand what decentralisation is all about. There was no consultation or any attempt to educate the public about the working of these new arrangements. The local communities built high expectations, only to have them dashed, because what they wanted were not government priorities or could not be afforded. Consequently, interest waned.

One of the difficulties is that the regional councils operate as part of the government. Government officials control them; the local community exercises very little influence, and neither do the regional officials have any power. The regions have no budgets to work with and any proposals (those officials agree to take forward) must be taken back to the relevant ministry for decision and funding.

These arrangements can hardly be described as decentralisation. They do not conform to any of the commonly accepted types such as delegation, devolution or decongestion and do not involve any transfer of powers or decision making to the regional authorities. Although an elaborate and complicated structure was set up, the locus of decision-making did not change, and remained firmly at the centre. What was set up is probably best described as location of services nearer to end users. There was nothing new about this, because some public services such as health centres and indeed, schools have always been located in local communities. The fact that some social services are available at the regional offices, obviating the need to travel to the city can hardly be called decentralisation.

Ensuring active community participation in service delivery can be very difficult, unless the right conditions are created. It cannot be assumed that the mere existence of Regional Authorities would cause active community participation. Public education to raise awareness and understanding is vital, not only to equip people to deal with these new responsibilities, but also to avoid raising unwarranted expectations and misconceptions about what to expect.

There is a great deal of confusion and overlap surrounding the role and relationship between the various public sector bodies. The Regional Authorities were meant to function independently and besides the existing system of local Town, Village Councils, Rural Councils and the school districts. All these administrative mechanisms operate independently of each other with no direct links between them. The geographical boundaries of the Regional Authorities are different from those of the School Districts, so that some Regional Authorities span more than one School District. The Town and village Councils have no direct links with the Regional

Authorities. What exists in practice, are several administrative bodies and mechanisms operating in parallel and independently of each other with overlapping boundaries and responsibilities.

That the decentralisation programme did not succeed is not surprising, given that the evidence suggest that conditions do not favour decentralisation. However, the aims of the programme are still relevant and worthwhile as an exercise in democratic administration. However, it is in need of review, and a simplified set of arrangements is required to foster community participation in the development process.

There is a need to review the regional authorities with a view to rationalising them. The relationship between the different regional councils, school districts, town and rural councils, requires clarification and to avoid any unnecessary duplication and confusion of roles and responsibilities.

#### **7.10.2 Establishment of School Districts**

School districts were established as part of the programme of decentralisation, and an attempt to improve the arrangements for school supervision. The country was originally divided into three school districts, each overseen by an education officer. Expansion in the number of schools and the supervisory role of the education officer resulted in the creation of more districts, bringing the total to the present six.

The criteria for establishing the education districts were largely geographical and round existing parish boundaries. Consequently, the sizes of the school districts vary in terms of both the numbers of schools and pupils (Table 11), reflecting to some extent the relative population densities. Secondary schools are outside the School District structure and their distribution also reflects a combination of population densities and the historical location of secondary schools around the City of Castries, with over half (8) of the existing secondary schools being geographically located in the District I area.

**Table 11. Distribution of Primary Schools and Pupils by District 1997/98****TABLE REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES**

*Source: St Lucia Ministry of Education, Youth, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, Statistical Digest, 1999*

The survey asked principals about their perceptions of the effectiveness of school districts. The responses to a question on the effects that school districts had had on services to their schools are summarised in Table 12. The responses of secondary school principals have not been subject to detailed analysis because secondary schools are not within the school district structure, but the responses have been shown included in the table.

**Table 12 (Q13). Effects of School Districts on Schools.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Primary Schools</b>		<b>Secondary Schools</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Improved	47	67	5	50
No change	22	32	5	50
Don't know	1	1	0	1
Did not respond	3	-	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>



Over two-thirds of the principals (67%) of primary principals said that the establishment of school districts had improved the support to their schools, with just over one fifth (22%) saying that there had been no change.

When probed on the nature of the improvements resulting from school districts, principals referred to matters such as greater 'visibility' of the Education Officer, better links with the Ministry of Education and quicker response times to matters that would previously have taken much longer. However, some pointed out that they did not see the point because most matters were continuing to be referred to the Ministry for decision.

During the focus group discussions, principals said that they could not assess the effectiveness of the school districts, because they were not sure of the exact reasons why they were set up or the objectives they were meant to achieve. However, they thought that they had something to do with providing support for schools and the government's plans for decentralising services.

The education officers who oversee school districts have very few powers. What powers they have are confined mainly to approving time off for staff and approving sports days and events. Even in the case of approving time off for staff, teachers often bypass education officers and go directly to the school manager (parish priest) who can also approve time off. It is common for the manager to approve time off for staff without even consulting or even notifying the principal.

In the micropolitics of education in St. Lucia, what happens at district level, depends very much on the extent to which the education officer is prepared to exercise initiative, and their standing in the local community, especially with principals and teachers. Some good practice are beginning to emerge such as the 'institutionalisation' of 'work plans' and staff development activities, although the latter is confined to just one district in which the education officer has taken the initiative.

Asked whether they would like to see more powers devolved to school districts, 90% of principals said 'Yes', although they were unsure about what powers they would like to see devolved. The general view was that the centre controlled the education system was too tightly, and that both the school district and schools are given more authority.

Education officials, while acknowledging that there could be the benefits in transferring of power and responsibilities lower down the order, also expressed caution. The main reasons seemed to be a lack of confidence in the ability of many principals to manage their schools effectively and the fear that some principals might pursue policies that are at odds with those of the Ministry. As one senior education officer remarked,

*The principals must be kept on their toes. We can't just let them go and do their own thing".*

The school districts seem well established and principals and officials think that schools have benefited as a result. However, the critical issue is whether they have been effective in bringing about school improvement. It is difficult to comment on their effectiveness, since no evaluations have been done. However, two critical issues need to be considered about the future of school districts. One is the role of the school districts as a structure to help improve performance and the other, the role of the education officer within the framework.

The school district appears to have the potential to develop into a supporting infrastructure at the local level and a focus for local educational activity. It could serve as a locus for joint and collaborative activities among schools and a forum for generating discussion at the district level about education involving the local communities.

The school district could also facilitate the sharing of resources, organising joint activities, and sharing good practice and collaboration in addressing local educational matters. This would allow each district to develop its own unique and collaborative

approach to local issues and ensure ownership, which will greatly improve the chances of success. It could be the entity around which to develop teachers' resource centres in line with the recommendations in the OECS Education Reform Strategy<sup>24</sup>.

However, it is not being suggested that the school districts should develop into another tier of bureaucracy within the education system with its own staff, secretariat and powers, because the critical mass so small, and thus, unlikely to be feasible or sustainable.

There also appears to be great ambiguity about the role of the education officer within the in respect of the school districts. It is unclear whether they are to play a strategic and influential role in educational development at the district level, or whether their role is merely to ensure that government regulations and procedures are followed. There is also the issue of the overlapping powers of the education officer and school managers.

## **7.11 Conclusions**

The arguments in favour are still persuasive but coming under increasing criticism. What is patently clear, however, is that decentralisation is not a panacea for the ills of educational management and administration.

There is no conclusive evidence that educational objectives of decentralisation are being achieved. In particular, evaluation of decentralisation programmes and evidence of the consequences of educational decentralisation in developing countries is generally lacking. Evidence in support of the efficiency argument that underpins much of the decentralisation policies seems the least conclusive.

The evaluation of decentralisation creates further problems. There are no models to measure or predict the independent effects of educational decentralisation thus,

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<sup>24</sup> This refers to the report entitled " Feasibility Study on the Development of Teachers Resource Centres"

making it difficult to assess the general effectiveness of decentralisation and its particular contribution towards the attainment of educational objectives.

Several critical factors influence educational decentralisation in small states. The decision about whether to decentralise will depend on the extent to which these factors are present and the importance and weight attached to them. The final decision will be influenced by a combination of factors of which scale is perhaps the most significant.

If the population of a small state is widely dispersed over vast land area, communities isolated and there is political will to share power, then there will be a greater tendency towards decentralisation. If on the other hand, the state is relatively compact, has good internal communication, a limited resource base, a tradition of centrally controlled development and not heavily dependant of foreign assistance, these conditions favour centralisation.

The establishment of Regional Authorities had design flaws, and the process was compounded by poor implementation. Elaborate and overly complex structures were set up to achieve rather modest outcomes. Moreover, they could not be sustained because of the small size of the units. Confusion also reigned because there were also several other bodies such as rural districts, town councils and school districts with ill-defined and sometimes overlapping roles, but no direct links or joined up thinking.

However, it is recognised that even in small states sub units may be required. But, what is not required in St. Lucia are additional tiers or layers administrative bureaucracy, which will neither improve decision-making nor improve educational achievements. However, there are many positive benefits that can be gained from some level of decentralisation, even in a small state like St. Lucia.

While school districts as an exercise in educational appeared to have been established, very little is known about their effectiveness, and particular contribution to improving performance of the education system is unclear. There is also ambiguity

surrounding the role of the education officer (district) and the overlapping powers with the school managers (parish priests). Moreover, in such a small system with limited resources, this network of school districts offices and education offices could be seen as superfluous, and in need of review. Such a review should consider rationalising the number of districts, review the role education officers, and make the boundaries coterminous with those of the regional authorities.

Notwithstanding the inappropriateness of the strategy, school districts are developing an identity, and could become an entity around which to focus educational activity.

The factors influencing decentralisation, when applied to St. Lucia, suggest that on balance, conditions do not favour decentralisation, and this could equally apply to other small education systems. The locus of decision making in St. Lucia provides further conclusive evidence of the centralised nature of educational decision-making.

*(Outline of the Educational Plan, St. Lucia -  
1994-99).*

## CHAPTER 8

### Management & Administration of Education in St. Lucia

#### 8.1 Introduction

This Chapter reports the findings from the fieldwork on educational management and administration in St. Lucia.

As a reminder, the fieldwork was conducted in two stages. The first stage consisted of a postal questionnaire survey of principals, and interviews with principals and senior education officials, to obtain their opinions and perceptions of several important areas of educational policy and practice with a view to identifying areas of interest for further investigation. The second stage of the field research consisted of in-depth semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with principals, senior teachers, church officials and educational administrators.

The chapter starts with an overview of the context within which educational policy making takes place, followed by the analysis and presentation of the findings from the survey questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis.

## 8.2 The Policy Context.

The factors that influence policy and practice in St. Lucia were examined in Chapter 6 where it was noted that there was no formally constituted policymaking body or policy-making procedures, to provide greater understanding and transparency in policymaking. The practice is that ideas and proposals from senior officials are channelled via the Permanent Secretary to the Minister.

While consultations with senior officers may take place on educational policy, it is not extended to other stakeholders such as parents, business, community organisations and teachers. Even the district education officers who have key roles to play in school supervision at school district level and ensuring that government policies are adhered to, have little involvement in policymaking.

Policy making in St. Lucia conforms to what is generally described as a state control model of policy making (Dale, 1989). This type of linear policy making has always been and continues to be the policy-making framework in St. Lucia. Policymaking is dominated by the state and remains the preserve of a few. This means that all those outside the upper echelon are excluded from policy and have little or no opportunity to influence or contribute to policy, as there are no formal channels for consultation. As Bowe, Ball & Gold observed in Britain:

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*remains strangely silent. (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992:6)*

These voices are even more silent in St. Lucia when it comes to policymaking.

Unlike educational policy making in most western countries, policymaking in St. Lucia, is not motivated or influenced by left or right leaning ideological positions. While there will be individuals or groups on either side of the ideological divide, these have not been galvanised into powerful forces or movements to try to influence policy. There are no influential bodies or professional groups that exert any great pressure or call for particular policies, although the St. Lucia Teachers' Union operates as a useful pressure group.

There are hardly any attempts to influence policy outside government. Even among politicians, there is not the Left-Right dichotomy that is so much a feature of western politics. Consequently, educational policy hardly changes with changes of government. The strategies of successive governments in St. Lucia have not been so much to do different things, but rather, to do more of the same better than their predecessors. Consequently, there have been no policy reversals in education.

However, even if policy is not driven by particular ideological influences, the policies themselves reflect underpinning theoretical and ideological positions. Policy, especially in education administration reflects the socio-economic and political forces and values in society.

The authorities seem to be missing an opportunity to garner support from the wider society for educational initiatives. The closed shop nature of policy-making means that the process is not open to alternative points of view, which would encourage wider debating of issues and improve the quality of decisions. This lack of democratisation in education has been acknowledged:

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*(St.*  
*Lucia, Ministry of Education, 1988:7).*

This was some 12 years ago, but the situation remains unchanged.

It is unclear how educational policies are triggered and neither is the decision making process transparent. While projects funded externally are generally based on research and well thought out project plans, those financed from local resources are generally lacking in research bases and are generally ad hoc. For example while the *OECS Education Reform Strategy* and the *Basic Education Reform Project* were subject to extensive research. By contrast, the changes in the recruitment and training of teachers, establishment of Boards of Management and school districts were not subject to any research.



This suggests that research is not seen as a valuable part of policy formulation, and that it is only done for externally funded projects, because it helps to secure external funding.

### **8.3 Data Analysis and Discussions**

The findings from the fieldwork are reported under five main headings: The Control of Education, Community Involvement in Education, School Governance & Management, Performance Measurement & Management and Training and Development of Principals.

The presentation is structured as follows. Under each heading, the results of the fieldwork are presented, followed by analysis and discussions. Where a table refers directly to responses to questions in the survey questionnaire, the question number is indicated (prefixed with Q). Where some respondents have not answered a specific question, the number failing to answer is shown in the tables by 'Did not respond' to make the number add up to the total number of respondents to the questionnaire. All percentages are based on the number of valid cases (i.e. the number of respondents answering the particular question).

### **8.4 Sample Characteristics**

The sample for the survey questionnaire was the entire population of 102 principals and elicited responses from 85 schools (83%). In terms of school sectors 73 were from primary schools and 12 from secondary schools, representing a response rate of 80% and with regard to gender, 35 were male 50 female.

Semi structured interviews were held with a stratified 11% sample of principals who returned the questionnaire, and focus group discussions with a total of 45 principals and senior teachers. Semi-structured interviews were held with key decision-makers in education, including the Minister of Education, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Chief Education Officer. (See Appendix II for a full list of interviewees).

The distribution of respondent schools on basis of school district, and the proportion of schools from each district responding and type of school, made the sample more representative. Table 13 below shows that the responses were fairly well distributed in terms of school districts, ranging from the highest (26%) of responses received were from District I, to the lowest (8%) from District VI. Secondary schools have not been included in this analysis because they are not part of the school district structure.

**Table 13. (Q2) Responses by School District As a Percentage of Total Responses  
(Primary Schools Only)**

School District	No. of Responses	% of Total Responses
District I	19	26
District II	12	16
District III	10	14
District IV	18	25
District V	8	11
District VI	6	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>

The proportion of schools from each district responding is shown in Table 14. The response rates were quite high, although there is a differential rate across districts, ranging from the highest, (95 %) of schools from District I responding, to the lowest (66%) of schools from District VI responding to the questionnaire

**Table 14. (Q2) Proportion of Schools from Districts Responding (Primary Schools Only)**

District	No. of Schools in District	% Schools Responding from Each District
I	20	95
II	13	92
III	13	76
IV	20	90
V	9	88
VI	9	66

## 8.5 The Control of Education

This section reports on the control of education with particular emphasis on the role of the church. The historical involvement of the church in education was examined earlier in Chapter 5.

As noted elsewhere, the education system is highly centralised with control from the Ministry of Education.. However, the church plays an important role in education, which has resulted in a state of permanent tension between church and state.

The church, education officials and principals all expressed dissatisfaction with the dual church and state control of education. Over half the principals, (57%) were dissatisfied with the dual state and church control of schools (Table 15). There is a significant difference in the perceptions of primary and secondary principals on this matter. While 45% of primary schools were satisfied with dual control, the figure for secondary schools was 27%.

The responses from primary schools would be better informed and reflect experience of working in schools under the dual state and church school, which are to be found only in the primary sector.

Education Officers and the Catholic Education Board of Management (CEBM) also expressed dissatisfaction with the current situation, but for very different reasons explained below.

**Table 15 (Q15) Satisfaction with Dual Church and State Control of Education**

	Primary Principals		Secondary Principals		All Principals	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	30	45	3	27	33	43
No	36	55	8	73	44	57
Did not respond	7	-	1	-	8	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

Nearly three-quarters of the principals (71%) who were not satisfied with the dual church and state control thought that the state only, with only 3%, the church only should control schools. Some respondents suggested that dual state and church control could work, if the respective roles of the church and state were clearly defined and differentiated.

Interestingly enough, there is an existing agreement between the Church and State (Concordat) that stipulates the respective roles of the church and state in school in respect of school management, but principals were unaware of such an agreement. An extract from the Concordat is reproduced below. :

*Whereas the church is responsible for the moral, spiritual aspects of education, every primary school should have a three-member board of management consisting of one church, one state, one member of the public to be given powers in staff selection, school discipline (staff and students) and other powers deemed necessary. (St. Lucia Ministry of Education 1988:Section 6)*

These roles are spelt out in the *Concordat*, but hardly anyone knows of its existence, much less its contents.

The principals, who favoured state only control of education, felt that the church did not have the resources to fulfil their management responsibilities effectively. They also felt that state only control would end the power struggle for control of education, which is having damaging consequences for children's education.

The senior education officials interviewed agreed that the current situation was unsatisfactory and needed to be resolved. They recognised that the church had a role to play in education, but thought that it should be confined to spiritual and moral matters, but not in curriculum matters or school management.

Ministry officials said that the church was interfering in curricula matters, which were outside its remit and competence and gave rise to conflict. In one instance, the Church

was forced to withdraw some materials on 'Social and Family Life that it had distributed to schools, because the Ministry felt that they were curriculum matters and thus, outside the Church's remit. In one case, a school remained without a principal for some considerable time because of disagreements between the Ministry and the Church over the merger of a denominational and non-denominational school. There are further tensions in the appointment of teachers with the state accusing the Church of being biased towards teachers who are Catholic.

The parish priests who are the designated school managers are often accused of not recommending the best candidates for the post of principal, and that the persons recommend are those who go to church regularly and are actively involved in church activities.

The position of the State, as expressed by the Minister of Education and other senior education officials is that, the church has a role to play in education but it sees the role confined solely to "spiritual and moral matters" and not meddling in general curriculum matters. Communication between the church and state seems rather confused. The official channel is that the Church the Catholic Education Board of Management should communicate with the Ministry of Education. However, it is unclear at which level this contact is to happen. Consequently, there are various points of contact with no co-ordination. Further, the powers of the church to deal with individual schools are delegated to the parish priests but they remain largely figureheads and contribute very little to school management. For instance, each denominational school is supposed to have a Management Board as specified by the Concordat, but hardly any exists and the parish is de facto, the Board'.

There are echoes of suspicion and mistrust even, between church and state. As noted by the following remark from the Catholic Education Board of Management

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The church fears that there may be a move to secularise schools and point to the refusal by some teachers to teach Religious Knowledge, as a sign of things to come.

It is clear that the relationship between the church and state is not good. It is most interesting that both the church and the state agree on each other's role in education, and presumably accept it. Yet, it does not work well in practice

The continued involvement of the church in school management, except for religious education, seems difficult to justify on educational or economic grounds. The church puts very few resources in education. Teachers' salaries, capital expenditure and a proportion of maintenance costs are all met by the state. Further, the parish priests although designated 'school managers', are not actually involved in the day to day management of schools, contribute little to the management and add little or no value to educational attainment, except to fulfil their responsibility in respect of school maintenance, religious education and exercising their power to approve time off for staff.

It could be argued that having church schools is divisive and that it should be absorbed within the state sector. If this were to happen, the management of schools would probably not get any worse, but with the potential for becoming much better. For one, there would no longer be the perpetual conflict and tension between the church and the state, principals and school managers and between education officers and school managers. This would also free the church to concentrate on spiritual and religious matters and the state to address the problems of improving the education system.

That the influence of the church has remained so strong may be due in part to the smallness of the system, enabling the church to exercise tighter religious and social control. In these small communities, the parish priest knows most of the parishioners personally and anyone with social standing will have a close association with the church, including policy makers and their families. It would be very easy for the church to turn parishioners against policymakers. Moreover, given the influence of the church with the older generation, politicians do not want to be seen as 'anti-church' or 'anti-religion', because that could cost them dearly at the polls.

The results of the survey show that most education officials including principals felt that the current dual control was unsatisfactory and would like to see state only control. This points to overwhelming support to wrest control from the church. However, it is going to be a monumental task, requiring political will, skill and courage.

## **8.6 Community Involvement in Education**

A distinction is often drawn between community and parental involvement in education. The reason is although parents are from the local community, many who participate in school activities from the community may not be parents, making it difficult to realise some of the benefits from parental interaction with the school in the learning process.

No such distinction will be drawn in these discussions here. This is not because it is not important conceptually, but because there is so little participation in education in St. Lucia, by either group to make that distinction significant. Consequently, community and parental involvement may be used interchangeably with parental seem as a subset of community involvement. However, some distinction will be made between the two concepts in developing a framework for democratising education.

All the ministry officials interviewed and most principals supported greater community involvement in education and felt the need to encourage it.

Asked whether they would like to see members of the community become more involved in decision-making about the running of schools, 83% of principals replied in the affirmative. The reasons given were interesting and quite revealing. The main reasons for wanting to see more community involvement included the following:

*"Parents as taxpayers should be able to influence the school";*

*"Community involvement would engender a greater sense of community responsibility for the school which would enable the help of parents to be harnessed in resolving problems such absenteeism, discipline and fundraising";*

*"The community has much expertise from which the school can benefit".*

*"More commitment and community support are vital, if the school and community are to operate effectively as a social system",*

These reasons are consistent with the general rationales for community participation in education. The World Bank (1995) found that schools could be improved by the greater involvement of local communities in making decisions about the use of inputs to meet local needs. Making institutions more autonomous also means greater accountability to both the local community and government. It has the advantage of fostering and developing a community and environment that are educationally oriented and professional development.

While those who did not want to see more community participation were in the minority (17%), their reasons are also very revealing:

*"To get the view of community leaders would place unnecessary pressures on management",*

*"The community did not understand how schools operate" and*

*" school management should be left to the experts".*

The overwhelming support for more community involvement in schools by principals and the reasons for it, show that principals recognised the important role that the community can play in education. This type of community involvement is also at the heart of the decentralisation as a means of democratising education (Chapter 7). Although most schools (76%) had PTAs and other links with their local communities, these relationships are based on unequal power and authority. The relationship will be very different if such links are based on the community having powers of decision-making.

Although much is being made about community and parental participation in education, parental participation is mainly through PTAs and largely concerned with fund raising activities.



The emphasis in St. Lucia appears to be on community involvement in education rather than parental participation. This emphasis is probably right because in other parts of the world where parental choice and participation have been the model of participation, there have been serious questions about the ability of parents to participate fully, the extent to which they can influence decisions and whether the usual one-parent representative truly represents parents or provide an individual perspective, which is more often the case. (Golby & Lane, 1989).

However, that is not to say that parental participation should not be encouraged or lacking in effectiveness, because there is research evidence suggesting that parental involvement in school contributes to pupil achievement. (Dye, 1988; Iverson, 1989). The research evidence suggests that parental involvement appears to be more effective when home-school relationship focus of issues of socialisation. The nature of that involvement and the way in which it takes place is critical, if the potential benefits are to be realised.

In working with the local community and parents in particular, principals have invariably controlled the agenda because of the power and authority that they derive from their position in the school. However, as the community and parents in particular become more involved with the school this power relationship is expected to change. Conflicts and misunderstandings will occur as they are bound to, when people with different values and background collaborate in the drive to achieve common objectives. Much can be gained by soliciting the support and harnessing the considerable skills and resources of influential national movements/ groups such as Mothers and Fathers Group, Credit Union Movement and 'Jounen Creole'.

The need for increased democratisation of education in the Caribbean is now receiving a great deal of attention, albeit from academics.<sup>25</sup> As Fenetty Scott (1996) argued, genuine educational democratisation may need an 'Athenian style' of democracy in which the

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<sup>25</sup> Issue 18 Volume 1 (1996) of the Caribbean Journal of Education was devoted entirely to the issue of

sovereign power and authority lies with the people. As she pointed out:

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*decision making still evades the mass of the population to a large extent. (Scott, 1996:3-4).*

This has extensive implications for the conceptualisation of educational democracy and in particular, the way in which the management of schools is perceived. Education officials, principals and the community would have to make a paradigm shift, away from the traditional and professional authority of the principal and headteachers to manage schools. Achieving this paradigm shift will require addressing the deference with which people in authority are treated and reducing the 'power distance'<sup>26</sup>, which can only be achieved through public education.

Serious consideration needs to be given to encourage community participation in education. There is a need to examine the method of school governance to see whether it is the best way of encouraging genuine community participation. Many countries have established self governing schools or site based management under which schools and their governing boards or councils have control over school budgets for teaching and other staff, the cost of maintenance of premises, heating and lighting; the purchase of equipment, school supplies and materials. There may a need to go beyond school governance, to engage the community and parents in particular in family learning projects so that they are better able to support their children's learning.

Whether such a model of community participation that involves giving real power to the community is successful in the St. Lucian context will depend on several factors. A major factor will be whether parents are genuinely encouraged to participate in school affairs.

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democratisation of education the Caribbean.

26 Hofstede formulated the concept of power distance. It refers to the extent of inequality and independence, and the way they are dealt with in different societies. In a small 'power distance' there is limited dependence of subordinates on bosses and a preference for consultation between bosses and subordinates, so there is interdependence. In large 'power distance' societies, there is a high degree of dependence of subordinates on bosses giving rise autocracy or paternalism. (Hofstede, 1991, Culture

Another crucial factor is whether sufficient numbers of people with the required skills, motivation and interest can be found. Given the limited resource base in small states like St. Lucia, schools in rural areas will always struggle to find the sufficient numbers of the appropriate people to be on the Boards.

There are lessons that can be learned from the experiences of Malta, a small state that has attempted to increase community participation in education by introducing School Councils. As Farrugia (1992) observed:

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*(Farrugia, 1992:164)*

The experience of Malta is not dissimilar to what occurs in St. Lucia. It reflects and raises major concerns over the issues of administrative barriers, resistance and inertia that typify former colonies.

A feature of these attempts at encouraging community participation in St. Lucia is that, they have not changed the locus of power and decision-making. Power invariably remains with the Ministry of Education and its officials.

It seems rather strange that even where there is the ultimate in community empowerment: site-based or self managing schools, the governing bodies or councils have at best minimal involvement in decisions about the core business of the school: teaching and learning, and at worst none at all. Given that these bodies are charged with the

responsibility for improving the management and performance of the school, it would seem reasonable to expect them to have some influence, on the areas of operation that probably have the greatest effect on pupil performance.

## 8.7 School Governance and Management

The St. Lucia Education Act, 1977 empowers the Minister to place all schools under the control of a Board of Management. The law confers wide-ranging powers on these Boards. Under the Act, the Board:

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*(St. Lucia Education Act, 1977, IV (12).*

Although these powers have been available since 1977, it was not until the early 1990s that a policy decision was taken to use the powers to set up Boards of Management for secondary schools. (The governance of primary schools is examined later). These Boards of Management were set as advisory bodies to assist principals with the management of their schools. The membership comprises: the principal as ex-officio member, Chair (appointed by the Minister), a principal from a feeder school, a ministry official (an education officer) and a community representative. Boards can also include teachers and student representatives.

The survey revealed that of the 15 secondary schools in existence five (40%) had set up Boards of Management of which only three were continuing to meet. However, all schools without Boards said that they expected one to be set up within the next 12 to 24 months, but 28 months later, during the second phase of the fieldwork, no new Boards of Management had been established, and only two were still functioning.

During the interviews, one principal referred to an unsuccessful attempt to set up a Board of Management in her school. Another said that the matter was "still debatable", meaning that it was contentious and unlikely to happen. Yet, another principal said that he was

told that a Board would be set up, but had heard nothing of it since, and had not bothered to follow it up. During the focus group discussions, it became evident that most principals were unsure of the procedure for setting up a Board of Management. They did not know whether the prime responsibility lay with the Ministry or with the school. Only one principal claimed to have seen a document explaining the role of the Board of Management. Significantly, the document did not refer to the procedure for setting up the Board.

Most principals (90%) thought the Board of Management was a good idea. However, the cross tabulation showed that only 33% of those schools that thought it was a good idea had a Board. Almost half the principals (48%) felt that they did not fully understand the role of the Board of Management (Table 16). Crucially, among secondary principals, 75% said that they fully understood the role of the Board.

**Table 16 (Q8) Understanding of the role of the Board of management**

	Primary Schools		Secondary schools		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	34	49	9	75	43	52
No	37	41	3	25	40	48
Did not respond	2	-	0	-	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

In response to a question about teachers' understanding of the role of the Board of Management, 58% of secondary principals selected the "Don't Know" answer. A quarter thought that the teachers in their school understood, with the remaining 17% saying that they did not. Given that a quarter of principals did not understand the role of the Boards, it is not surprising that more than half did not know whether their teachers understood it.

Support for Boards of Management was also reiterated during the interviews and focus

group discussions. However, principals had serious concerns. They were particularly suspicious of those appointed as Chair, which they invariably described as "party (political) hacks". They were seen very much as people with political ambitions and an inflated sense of their own importance who felt that they could push principals around. The Chairs were also labelled 'Ministry spies' appointed to report on principals to the Ministry of Education. This suggests a great deal of mistrust and a highly charged atmosphere, within which the Boards of Management operate. It is no wonder that the establishment of the Boards have been problematic and controversial.

Principals said that the role of the Board, its duties and powers, especially vis à vis those of the principal, was never explained to, or understood by Board members. Consequently, some Board members and chairs in particular, interfered with the day-to-day running of schools, and became more of a hindrance than help. As one principal remarked (of his Chairs), *"He really think he is running the school"*

Ministry officials however, saw the situation quite differently. They blamed principals for not co-operating and working with the Boards, because they were afraid of their schools being exposed to public scrutiny.

It is evident that Ministry officials and principals had not discussed the problems, and no attempt had been made to review the situation to find out what went wrong and the lessons to be learned.

Principals were asked about the impact that they felt the Board had had on the operation of schools. The results are summarised in Table 17. Over half of all principals (54%) thought that the Board had made them more accountable and 52% thought it had improved the management of the school. Among secondary heads, the corresponding figures were 40% and 50% respectively and 33% each for schools with Boards. While 15% of principals thought that the Board had undermined the authority of the principal, the figure for secondary principals was 45%, and for those with Boards, only 16%.

The difference in perception may be because only secondary principals (but not all) would have had experience of working with Boards, so different factors and sources of information would have informed the answers given by non-secondary principals.

The proportion of secondary principals thinking that the Board had undermined the authority of the principal is surprisingly high, given that a high proportion of them it was a good idea. Significantly, only 16% of those that had had experience of working with Boards thinking that they undermined the authority of the principal.

**Table 17 (Q10). Effects of Boards of Management on the Operation Schools.**

Response	All Principals		Principals of Secondary Schools		Principals of Secondary Schools with Boards	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Made principals more accountable	39	54	4	40	2	33
Improved the management of the school	38	52	5	50	2	33
Provided useful expertise	31	43	2	20	3	66
No effect on management	15	20	2	20	1	16
Undermined the authority of the principal	11	15	4	40	1	16
Undue Interference from outsiders	8	11	3	30	1	16

*Respondents could choose more than one answer, so percentages do not sum to 100 or frequency to the number of valid responses, which was 72 of which 10 were secondary principals.*

It is significant that 66% of secondary principals who had Boards in their schools thought they had brought in useful expertise, compared to 20% of all secondary principals. This may have been due to few Boards in existence and their poor functioning, which meant most principals had no experience of working with them, and their responses were not well informed.

The reason for this apparent disparity and inconsistency seems to be that community participation is interpreted as parental and other community group involvement, which

they welcome. The Board of Management on the other hand, is associated with the Ministry of Education and viewed as an instrument of government policy and control. Table 18 shows that there was no significant majority view among secondary principals about the powers of the Boards of Management. Over a quarter (27%) of the principals selected the 'Can't say' answer. This suggests that those principals did not know enough about the powers of the Boards to enable them to make an informed judgement about its powers. Even among the six schools with Boards, one principal also selected the 'Can't say' answer. This is consistent with findings reported earlier, that a quarter of them said they did not fully understand the role of the Board. Among primary principals, 56% selected the 'Can't say' answer, which is not surprising, given that they would not have had little knowledge about Boards and almost certainly no experience of working with any.

**Table 18 (Q11). Principals' Perceptions' of the Powers of the Boards of Management.**

	Primary Schools		Secondary schools		Secondary Schools with Boards	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Excessive	4	6	2	19	1	20
Adequate	17	26	3	27	2	40
Inadequate	8	12	3	27	1	20
Can't say	36	56	3	27	1	20
Did not respond	8	-	1	0	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

*Percentages rounded off to add up to 100%.*

The policy decision to set up Boards of Management has wide support and the prevailing view is that schools will benefit. The problem appeared to lie with the implementation, and not the policies themselves or their objectives. Among primary principals, not surprisingly, over half felt that they could not say because Boards were being set up only in secondary schools and they would have known little about them, given the general lack of knowledge about Boards, even among some secondary principals.



There is wide support in the literature for setting up different models of governance for schools. (Golby & Lane, 1989; Scott, 1996O; Whitty et al, 1998). Countries in the Caribbean including Barbados and Jamaica have set up similar bodies for the governance of schools. In Jamaica, these Boards have powers in respect of budgets and staffing appointments. It is difficult to find out whether these are effective in the absence of any evaluations.

While the broad policy objective of community participation is laudable, and worthwhile, the St. Lucian experience has been problematic, not least because of the lack of clarity and communication of objectives. While small scale and the potential to communicate to whole communities very quickly are often cited as an advantage of scale, advantage has not been taken of this factor.

It would have been relatively easy to brief all principals and secondary school principals in particular about the Boards. Monitoring progress should have also been relatively easy given that there are only a few secondary schools. But the problem was much more fundamental in that there were no management systems in place to facilitate this. A situation, which was further complicated by the lack of a framework for policy analysis, which would at least ensure that appropriate systems and mechanisms were in place for monitoring progress.

There is much that can be learned from implementation research, which attempts to define the structures and processes through which policies are put into practice. The early research in this area (Sabatien, 1986) would be particularly useful because they focused on the implementation of policies developed at the centre and vitally, the conditions for and likelihood of successful implementation.

The Ministry of Education intends to revive Boards of Management, because officials see them as an important element in the drive towards greater accountability and improvement in school management. However, there were no indications to suggest that it will be done any differently the next time. It would be most interesting to see the

approach to policy management next time and especially whether lessons have been learned.

## 8.8 School Planning, Organisation School Management

This section reports on issues relating to both macro and micro planning focusing on management at the school level.

### 8.8.1 Communication of Policy

The survey asked principals about their understanding of government priorities in education in an attempt to assess the level of awareness and the extent to which educational priorities were being articulated. Almost half (48%) described their understanding as 'Good' with over a third (36%), describing their understanding as only 'Fair'. (Table 19). Only 16% described their understanding of government priorities for education as 'Very Good'. However, there were substantial differences between in the level of understanding of priorities in education by between the school sectors. While only 13% of primary principals described their understanding as 'good' the figure for secondary schools was 33%.

**Table 19 (Q31) Principals' Understanding of Government Priorities in Education.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Responses	
Response	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very good	9	13	4	33	13	16
Good	34	49	5	42	39	48
Fair	26	38	3	25	29	36
Did not respond	4	-	0	-	4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

When asked what they thought the priorities in education were, principals identified several issues, based on their experiences and perceptions of the situation as opposed to any articulated policy.

The priorities identified by principals included, shortage of trained teachers, training of the administrators in management, the lack of administrative support, the question of commitment of those entering teaching as a last resort, absenteeism and the poor quality of school accommodation. Regarding the quality of accommodation, 38% of principals reported overcrowding in their schools (especially primary schools). Education officials identified the following areas as key priorities, curriculum reform, and quality of leadership, training of principals, accommodation, and expansion of secondary and tertiary education.

Principals and policymakers in education identified many of the same issues. This was rather surprising, given the lack of published information and communication about educational policy. This may be however, a reflection of one of the features of smallness: word gets round very quickly and a great deal of communication takes place via informal channels and social contacts. It may also be because the educational problems and the key priorities have changed little over the years, although the approaches may have changed. However, reliance on these sources and channels for information can be dangerous, as it can be susceptible to speculation and misinformation in the absence of authoritative information.

Principals were asked about their familiarity the OECS Education Reform Strategy. Almost a third (63%) said that they were not familiar with the OECS Reform Strategy. (Table 20), yet planning for implementation was already at an advanced stage.

**Table 20 (Q32) Familiarity with OECS Reform Strategy.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Responses	
Response	No of Responses	%	No. of responses	%	No.	%
Yes	25	37	4	36	29	37
No	43	63	7	64	50	63
Did not respond	5	-	1	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

During the interviews and focus groups, some principals admitted that, the first they had heard of the reforms was through the questionnaire. Several had taken the initiative to find out about it from the Ministry of Education! This clearly shows a failure to communicate policy. This may also be a reflection of prevailing pattern of public policy making in St. Lucia, where policy making involves only a few senior officials. While there is much talk about consultation in public policy making, it remains mere verbiage. It may be that policy ownership is yet to become an issue in public administration in St. Lucia.

The failure to communicate policy is was a great pity, because the Ministry has produced several planning and policy documents that highlight and articulate educational priorities or they are at least implied<sup>27</sup>. However, these remain within the confines of the Ministry and not in the public domain where they rightly belong. The belief that information is power seems very prevalent in the Ministry of Education and the practice is to communicate on a "need to know" basis, with information being restricted to those matters that it is felt recipients need to know. Yet, a small country like St. Lucia with good communication infrastructure presents an excellent opportunity and is an ideal to excel in communication and reap the benefits accruing.

There are other examples of the failure to communicate policy initiatives. For example, during the focus group discussions, principals admitted that they did not know the rationale for establishing school districts and doubted whether such a document existed. As one principal put it:

*"I'm not sure that there was ever such a document exists, explaining the rationale for setting up school districts".*

The survey asked a question about their accountability in an attempt to obtain clarity

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<sup>27</sup>Most of these documents are for internal circulation within the Ministry and seldom published. They include Annual Work Plans, Development Plan Phase 2 1990-1995, Draft Policy Statement, 1988, Management and Administration of the System, Draft Training Policy 1988/89.

about the channels of communication and accountability for the management of schools. The results are summarised in Table 21.

Just over two-thirds (68%) of the principals thought that they were directly accountable to the District Education Officer for the day-to-day management of their schools. Almost a quarter (21%) said that they were directly accountable to the Chief Education Officer. Another 8% thought they were accountable to some "Other Body" which presumably referred to the parish priest who also has the title of school manager for denominational schools.

**Table 21 (Q30) To whom school principals say they are directly accountable for the day-to-day management of their schools.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Board of Management	2	4	1	9	3	4
District Education Officer	51	68	3	27	54	68
Chief Education Officer	14	21	3	27	17	21
Other	2	7	4	37	6	7
Did not respond	4	0	1	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

Just over half the primary principals (51%) said that they were directly accountable to the District Education Officer for the day to day management of their schools with almost a quarter saying that, they were accountable to the Chief Education Officer. Those who said that they were accountable to another body were all denominational schools that saw themselves as accountable to the parish priest, officially designated as school manager. The secondary schools that said that they were accountable to 'other' referred to the Education Officer, Secondary School. It is surprising that 27% of the secondary schools said they were accountable to the District Education Officer, because secondary schools are not even part of the School District structure.

It is rather surprising that there is no consensus among principals about the lines of

accountability for the management of their school. However, these findings confirm the perception of confusion and ill-defined lines of communication among the largest and most senior group of educational administrators. If such confusion reigns among those senior officials, it is not difficult to imagine what the understanding is among those lower down the order, and how it can easily lead to confusion.

This is even more surprising, given the small size of the education system, and the prevalence of features associated with structural, bureaucratic and hierarchical models of management, which emphasise the importance accountability and hierarchical lines of communication. What seems like, and ought to be a simple system, seems plagued by unnecessary complexity, and shrouded in confusion.

Much needs to be done to clarify the channels of communication and accountability within the system. The confusion seems to have arisen because of the dual church and state control, compounded by the lack of clarity of lines of authority and accountability by the Ministry of Education.

This also goes against the grain of mainstream management thinking, which places great importance on the issue of lines of communication and accountability to ensure that information is directed through the appropriate channels for appropriate action.

### **8.8.2 Planning at School Level**

Principals were asked whether they undertook management functions such as planning, monitoring and objective setting. Their responses are summarised in Tables 22-24 below.

Tables 22-24 suggest that nearly all principals are involved in some of strategic or operational, planning for their schools, although such plans were not necessarily published.

**Table 22 (Q24) Working to an Annual Plan.**

Response	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	69	97	9	75	78	95
No	2	3	3	25	5	5
Did not respond	2	-	0	0	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 23 (Q25). Setting Annual Targets**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	68	98	9	100	77	96
No	1	2	2	0	3	4
Did not respond	4	-	1	0	5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 24 (Q26) Monitoring Performance**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	64	95	11	100	75	95
No	3	5	0	0	4	5
Did not respond	6	-	1	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	

A very high proportion of principals said that they undertook what could be termed strategic activities such as planning, setting targets and monitoring performance. The proportion claiming to undertake these activities seem surprisingly high, given that the

idea of school annual work plans was only recently introduced as a voluntary activity, and yet to be institutionalised.

However, there was very little documentary evidence to support the reportedly high degree of monitoring and control implied by the responses. This may be due in part to different interpretations of the key words such as planning, monitoring and target setting that were not defined in the questionnaire and may have been interpreted in a very informal way.

Very few schools were found to have published plans. This was not surprising, given that the idea of annual work plans for schools had only been recently introduced and schools were not required to produce any. During the interviews, some principals appeared to have clear objectives for their schools, while others had no clear objectives and found it difficult to say exactly what it was that the school was trying to achieve, other than improving examination pass rates. Even where principals were clear about what they wanted to achieve, the objectives were neither documented, nor always shared with staff.

It is difficult to see how schools can achieve their objectives, if the staff that are responsible for achieving them do not know that they are.

Planning at school level is best described as rudimentary. The process could have been helped by some co-ordination of the planning cycles of the schools and the Ministry of Education. Principals often do not receive the Ministry's directives until the start of the academic year. Moreover, the two sets of plans were often 'out of synch' with each other, causing a great deal of problems for school who must revise their plans. For example, a circular instructing schools to increase the number of periods taught by secondary school teachers was received in the summer, when timetables had already been prepared and staff away on holiday.

There is now a move to encourage schools to go beyond mission statements and produce annual work plans. However, it is driven locally by the district education officer and is



not (yet) a requirement of the Ministry. Some schools from at least one district had submitted an action plan to the Ministry, but received no feedback. This was not entirely surprising, because it is difficult to how useful feedback can be provided within a vacuum, since there was no system in place for dealing with this issue and very importantly, no criteria or framework for assessing these plans. What may not have been realised was that, this amounts to managing change, and as such, must be managed carefully and systematically and ensuring that all those affected, and are empowered to deal with the changes. However, this is a significant advance towards developing a planning culture in schools.

During the field research, the author was fortunate enough to participate in a training workshop for principals. During a discussion on school mission statements, principals were very forceful in pointing out that the role of the principal was to lead, meaning taking important decisions by themselves alone. Most of the principals and the senior teachers attending the workshop said that they saw the production of the mission statement and work plan as the work of the principal, literally, and did not see the need to consult staff about it.

This belief may be due to confusion and misunderstanding between the role and responsibility of the principals and the processes and procedures for getting work done. However, it could, and is more likely to be a reflection of the authoritarian and bureaucratic procedures that have dominated public life in both the colonial and postcolonial periods, where the emphasis has been on following rules and regulations without consultation. It may also be the case that principals feel that to consult teachers on important and difficult matters would be perceived by teachers as incompetence on the part of the principal.

The school development plan can only be useful if they are used strategically. They are expected to clarify the school's objectives quantitatively and qualitatively with clear outcomes, identify resources and have an appropriate review and evaluation system. It is also quite important that the whole school owns the plans, which is likely to result in

greater commitment and increase the likelihood of successful implementation.

### **8.8.3 School Organisation and Management**

Asked whether they were happy with the current management structure of their schools, 66% of principals said that they were, but almost one quarter (24%) said that they were not.

The main reason for dissatisfaction with the arrangements was the lack of remunerated management posts in schools, especially the primary schools. While secondary schools are eligible for, and some have Vice-principals (eligibility criteria unclear), primary schools have no other management posts such as deputy heads.

The absence of remunerated senior post such as vice-principal and deputy headteachers has meant that senior teachers undertake additional responsibilities voluntarily. These responsibilities are neither acknowledged nor paid at the official level. Some secondary schools have well-developed and sophisticated management structures that include faculty heads, departmental heads, year heads and cross-school functions are undertaken voluntarily and unremunerated. However, some principals have been able to allow some staff reduced teaching for undertaking some of these additional responsibilities. There is a great deal of goodwill from teachers, who undertake these additional duties, in spite of working under very testing conditions.

This appears to be due to a combination of professional commitment and concern for the children. It may have to do with the fact that teachers are likely to know the parents of all the children from the school and their parents, which is a feature of small states. Moreover, many principals and senior teachers are reluctant to criticise the education system (not openly anyway) and defend the situation almost apologetically, as illustrated by the following example. During the focus group discussions principals were at pains to point out that St. Lucia was a small country with limited resources and could not afford

the things that needed to be done to improve the education system, but that the government was trying its best. Therefore, they were grateful at being exposed and sensitised to developments such as school effectiveness. It was further pointed out that the local education system should not be judged by the standards of prosperous industrialised countries.

This suggests an acceptance that St. Lucia as a small country is expected to lag behind in developmental terms and utilising technology, implying a constant struggle to 'catch up'. This has implications for the perceived ability and capacity to respond to the challenges such as those posed by globalisation.

While this no doubt demonstrates the commitment of the teachers, a modern day education system cannot rely on goodwill and voluntarism for its operation, or blame the lack of resources for its inability to make progress and improve performance. Another consequence of this type of goodwill and voluntarism is that it could seriously understate the true cost of public education.

Besides management, other support services are lacking or completely absent. Primary schools are not provided with any administrative and clerical support, so principals do their own administration. There are no counselling or guidance services.

There is no system of 'supply teaching' to cover for absent teachers. When teachers are absent, the head teacher covers where possible, or classes are combined or work is set for the class with some supervision.

Principals were asked about the extent to which they thought the quality of school management affected school performance. Nearly all the principals (94%) thought the quality of management in a school affected its performance 'significantly' Table 25.

**Table 25 (Q28). Extent to Which Quality of Management Affects School Performance.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Significantly	65	93	12	100	77	94
Moderately	3	4	0	0	3	4
Marginally	1	1.5	0	0	1	1
Negligibly	1	1.5	0	0	1	1
Did not respond	3	-	0	0	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

The potential impact of good management on school performance and the ultimate improvement in the education system was widely recognised and the need for improved management of the education system is recognised in St. Lucia and programmes are being mounted to train educational administrators in management. This raises the important issue of the role of the principal and his/her effect in influencing pupil achievement.

Principals in St. Lucia have acknowledged that the contemporary principal is expected to be more than someone who administers a school. The theme of the 1992 Principals' Annual Conference was "The Effective Principal: Role, Authority and Responsibility in a Changing Society". A principal described the role thus:

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*a common purpose and direction for the achievement of set goals. (St. Lucia, 1992:42).*

Regarding the management and administrative role, he was very clear:

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*change within the school system for the achievement of goal. (St. Lucia, 1992:42).*

That principals consider management a major determinant of school performance represents a paradigm shift in the way principals perceive their role. This is particularly significant in St. Lucia where principals have traditionally seen themselves more as instructional leaders as opposed to managers. Much of the developments around school management in St. Lucia and the role of the principal in particular, have been influenced to a significant degree by school effectiveness research and the increasing application of business practices and principles to education.

The government has been investing a great deal in management training for principals, much of it predicated on the belief from the school effectiveness movement that principals do make a difference in schools.

However, problems can persist. As Hawes, Hugh & Stephens (1990), pointed out:

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*achieving desired changes in the behaviour of learners. (Hawes & Stephens, Davis, 1990:112)*

It should also be understood however, that management is only one of many factors that contribute to improved school performance. Moreover, being trained in management and administration is no guarantee of being a successful principal or manager.

**Table 26 (Q14) Decentralising More Authority to Schools**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	59	91	8	88	67	88
No	6	9	1	12	7	12
Did not respond	8	-	3	0	11	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>52</b>

The vast majority of principals (88%) said that they would like to see more authority decentralised to schools (Table 26). The particular functions that they would like to see devolved to schools are summarised in Table 27. The higher proportion of primary principals wanting to see more functions decentralised to schools reflects the fact that secondary schools already enjoy some level of decentralisation.

**Table 27 (Q22) Management functions that should be decentralised to Schools**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Staff recruitment	40	57	6	50	46	56
Budgetary management	41	58	5	42	46	56
Staff discipline	34	49	9	75	43	52
Curriculum development	34	49	5	42	39	48
Staff appraisal	30	43	7	58	37	45
Staff training	29	41	5	42	34	41
Fund raising/income generation	24	34	3	25	27	34
Others	5	7	1	9	6	7
Did not respond	3		0	0	-	

*Respondents could choose more than one answer, so totals do not sum to 100 percent or to the number of respondents, which were 70 for primary and 12 for secondary schools.*

Over half the principals identified three particular management functions that they would wish to see transferred to schools viz.: staff discipline, staff recruitment and budgetary management. Almost half again, identified three further functions that they would like to see devolved to schools. It is significant that the areas in which principals would like more involvement are arguably the most significant and influential areas of educational decision-making, the areas that are the most strongly controlled centrally.

Some of the other "Other" functions that principals would like to see devolved included responsibility for furniture, school maintenance, student suspensions & expulsions, staff discipline, budget management and the appointment of ancillary staff. The prevalent view was that the lack of authority for dealing with disciplinary matters in respect of both staff and students was particularly problematic and undermined their professionalism and authority. Within the existing regulations, principals have only limited powers in dealing with disciplinary matters in respect of both students and staff. Principals have some limited powers of exclusion of pupils and none in respect of teachers. Ministry officials conduct any investigations arising out of a complaint or pupil suspension, with the Minister's decision being final. The disciplinary procedures are vague, lack transparency and there is uncertainty and confusion, as to whether there is an appeals procedure and what it is.

Principals were of the view that political considerations influenced the Minister's decisions in disciplinary matters, predicated on the observation that the Minister as the only, and final arbiter invariably decides in favour of pupils and against the school. Principals did not regard the Ministry as being supportive of the school in relation to disciplinary matters.

Secondary schools in St. Lucia already operate a form of devolved budget, but not primary schools. There were no plans to devolve budgets to primary schools in the same way and the reasons for this is unclear.

However, primary schools are allocated notional budgets, which they can draw down by requisitioning materials from the Ministry's stores. Schools in St. Lucia have historically not been allowed to handle cash. In the early days, there was probably little or no cash to handle. Learning materials and capital equipment were supplied to schools directly from the Ministry, who benefited from bulk buying for the whole education system. However, the climate has changed. Materials and supplies are readily available from many sources that are more convenient and schools can now probably obtain better value for money, if they were allowed to spend their budget as they saw fit. Given that secondary schools

have been given some measure of financial control, it may only a matter of time before primary schools are given greater control in managing their budgets.

During the interviews, primary school principals said that they would prefer to manage their budgets. They thought that this would not only give them the ability to prioritise expenditure but importantly, enable them to obtain the supplies they need, when they need them, without having to depend on supplies from the Ministry's stores (always scarce) or having to make do with whatever supplies that are available, even if they are not what schools need or want.

The survey results show that principals want greater responsibility for managing the affairs of their school. They certainly think that some degree of decentralisation is desirable to give them greater control and influence in managing their schools.

However, principals' enthusiasm for greater empowerment and autonomy in managing their schools is not entirely shared by ministry officials. Officials were more cautious. The Chief Education Officer, while acknowledging there were functions performed centrally that could be transferred to schools, said that the matter should be approached with great caution. The Director of the OECS Education Strategy thought that there was room for some level of deconcentration, but also recognised scale as an important issue.

While schools showed a strong preference to have greater powers of decision-making, implementing these proposals has extensive implications. It is not at all clear, whether principals are fully aware of those. The evidence is that the teaching profession would support moves towards greater empowerment of schools. Any move towards granting greater autonomy to schools should be linked to the issue of community participation and the role of Boards of Management.

Principals were asked to identify the barriers to improving effectiveness; their responses are summarised in Table 28.



Three factors were cited by well over 80% of principals as barriers to improving the effectiveness of school management: heavy workload of principals, inadequate materials and the lack of motivation among students. These issues were further explored in the interviews.

**Table 28 (Q27). Barriers to Improving Effectiveness in School Management.**

Response	Primary		Secondary		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Lack of student motivation	58	81	11	100	69	83
Inadequate materials and equipment	61	71	7	64	68	82
Heavy workload of principals	57	80	9	82	67	82
Low morale of teachers	48	67	6	55	54	65
Shortage of trained teachers	29	40	7	64	36	44
Poor quality of accommodation	29	40	2	18	31	37
Inadequate training of school managers	28	39	2	18	30	36
Lack of decision making powers at school level	24	33	6	55	30	38
Others	8	11	3	27	11	13

*Respondents could choose as many answers as they wished so totals will not add up to either 100% or to the number of respondents. Total number of respondents was 72 Primary and 11 Secondary schools.*

Principals in both primary and secondary schools perceive lack of student motivation as the single most important barrier to school effectiveness, cited by 81% of primary and 83 % of secondary principals. This problem was attributed in part to the poor quality of some learning environments, which are not always conducive to learning, often characterised by a lack of equipment and materials.

The shortage of trained teachers was cited as a barrier to effective school management by 40% of primary and 64% of secondary principals. The figure was surprising low, given that the shortage of trained teachers has always been endemic in the region since the

beginning of mass education, and is generally regarded as a major contributory factor to improving school achievement in developing countries. However, this may be a reflection of the proportion of the percentage of trained teachers in the system, which stood at 79% for secondary and 61% primary during the period of the fieldwork (1994). The corresponding figures for 1998 were 80% and 69% respectively. The high proportion of trained teachers in secondary schools (54% being graduates in 1998) has been helped with the recruitment of graduate teachers from other parts of the Caribbean, especially Guyana.

Principals acknowledged the improved academic qualifications of teachers since the abolition of the pupil teacher system, but felt that the professional (pedagogical) element had suffered with adverse effects on learning. They claimed that new recruits had no understanding of how learning takes place or any theoretical frame of reference. Consequently, they taught in exactly the same way that they had been taught. Most did not have the ability to judge the appropriate levels or breadth of content to be taught. Principals were particularly concerned about the inability of many new recruits to maintain classroom control. Teachers shouting above the voices of pupils to be heard in their attempt to maintain classroom control and discipline were frequent occurrences.

Moreover, there were serious concerns about the emotional maturity and ability of 16-year-olds to deal appropriately with the emotional needs of children, some of whom are not much younger than them. It should be remembered that, although the pupil teacher system has been abolished, nearly all those entering teaching in the primary sector come directly from secondary schools with CXC's are 16 year olds and those entering teaching in secondary schools come directly from the community college with A levels and are about 18 years old.

During the interviews with principals, it emerged that teacher morale and the lack of motivation were major concerns. Low morale was causing unhappiness and lack of motivation among staff, resulting in tension and strained relationship between principals and teachers, which often adversely affected the effective running of schools.

Staff turnover was also identified as a further factor affecting the improvement of school performance. The problem was exacerbated when trained staff left, because most new recruits would invariably be untrained and come directly from secondary school, since no pool of trained teachers exists from which to recruit.

Managing staff has always been a very difficult and challenging management task and it is therefore not surprising that they see it as problematic. The situation may be particularly frustrating, given that many of the causes of much of the tension are exogenous to the school: teacher salaries, poor working environments and low status of teaching, with principals unable to do much to address them.

Overcrowding also exacerbates the problem of motivation. Well over a third (37%) of principals cited the poor quality of accommodation as affecting the effective management of their school, with the problem seemingly more acute in the primary sector, where 40% of principals cited it as a barrier compared to 31% in the secondary sector.

The issue of discipline emerged as a major issue of concern, not only to principals but also to education officials. The trend towards indiscipline in schools, a reflection of the increasing violent nature of the society was acknowledged and principals felt frustrated that they had very little power in respect of student suspensions and expulsions. Principals can suspend students for a maximum of two weeks and many students see it as an opportunity to be away from school - a place where many pupils did not want to be in the first place. Suspensions had therefore become ineffectual as a deterrent as many students make sure that they have their "two weeks off"! Similarly, in respect of teachers, principals have the power to 'withdraw teachers from classes' but cannot suspend, which is the prerogative of the Ministry of Education. If a teacher is to be suspended, the principal must report the incident to the Ministry of Education, who will take the appropriate action.

Other barriers to effectiveness identified by principals included the lack of support and backing from the Ministry of Education, especially in complaint situations or conflict between school and teachers or school and parents/pupils.

Notwithstanding the lack of power and the considerable constraints at the school level, much can be done at the school level by principals to influence the performance of their schools. There is still a range of management functions undertaken by principals that could potentially make a difference. Principals still have several key roles to play in school management, instructional supervision and leadership, school-community relationship and communications with the Ministry of Education.

There are opportunities for decision-making in terms of timetabling and all its implications. Principals can make decisions about who teaches particular subjects and to whom, ensure staffing levels are maintained, keep necessary school records, monitor progress and develop initiatives to support both staff and students. A major part of the task is personnel management in building an effective team among the staff who is committed to improving pupil performance. However, the lack of powers at the local level to deal with some of those issues makes the task of managing schools that more difficult.

Principals also have responsibility for induction of new staff (usually untrained) and for providing pedagogical support in the rudiments of teaching and learning. This may be one area in which principals might be very effective, if it is accepted that they were promoted to principal because of their teaching and pedagogical competence. However, it may not be the case, because many principals use their own experiences to advise and help develop their teachers. In addition, these experiences may be based on, and reinforce inappropriate and poor pedagogy.

## 8.9 Performance Measurements and Management

This section reports on how the performance of the education system is measured and the process managed.

Principals were asked to identify the indicators they used to measure performance of their school. The results are shown in Table 29.

**Table 29 (Q23). School Performance Indicators.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Examination pass rates	59	70	12	100	71	87
Attitude and behavioural changes	32	34	4	66	36	44
Distribution of teacher qualifications	20	24	6	50	26	32
No of students on roll	12	14	2	83	14	17
Drop-out rate	12	14	1	8	13	16
Teacher-student ratio	7	8	2	16	9	11
Cost per Student	2	1	1	25	3	4
Others	6	7	0	0	6	7
Did not respond	3	-	0	-	3	-

*Respondents could choose more than one answer so percentages do not sum to 100 or frequency to number of respondents answering the question, which was 82.*

Most principals (87%) indicated that they used examination pass rates to measure performance, with 100% of secondary and 70% primary schools citing it as a performance indicator. Almost half the principals (44%) said that they used behavioural changes and 32%, the distribution of teacher qualifications. The high proportion using examination results a performance indicator is not surprising because in reality, it is the main, and especially in secondary schools, the only performance indicator that counts. This applies equally to all stakeholders: parents, pupils, teachers, employers and the community at large.

The claim to using of some of the other indicators is very surprising. Although 44% said they used ‘attitude and behavioural changes, there was no system (national or school

level) for recording these changes, making difficult to see how they are being used. A small minority, (4%) of principals said that they used the cost per student to measure performance. This is rather curious because, not only does the Ministry not regard cost as a performance indicator, principals do not know the cost of running their schools, so it is difficult to see how they could use this unit cost. It is puzzling why such a high proportion of secondary principals (83%) claim to use numbers on roll as a performance indicator, given that there is a shortage of secondary school places, and with only approximately 70% of the age cohort attending secondary school. Consequently, the schools are invariably oversubscribed, with many students passing the Common Entrance Examination, but cannot be allocated a place.

Data on some of the quantifiable indicators that principals claim to use, such as staff-student ratio, retention rate and enrolment are readily available, but there was no evidence that they were being used in any meaningful way. Even at the ministerial level the collection of the data is no more than routine and perfunctory and not used to inform the planning and management of the system.

## **8.10 School Performance Review**

Principals saw the system of Performance Review as potentially useful in giving schools a focus, something which some principals thought could be used to ensure that teachers ‘pulled up their socks’, as they are more likely to respond to initiatives emanating from the Ministry than those coming the principal. As one principal put it:

*“I think it's a very worthwhile exercise because it brings out your strengths and weaknesses and you get suggestions on how to improve your weaknesses”.*

Some principals were critical and expressed great cynicism about the whole exercise. Reference was made to several reviews following which no review reports had been produced. There had been particular problems with feedback and action plans from the review process. Some schools did not receive the written review reports that are supposed

to follow the review. Even in the cases where written reports have been produced, the implementation of action plans is not monitored.

One surprise finding from the discussions was the apparent lack of familiarity with the school performance review process among some principals and senior teachers. Many of them did not recognise the process at first (by name), especially those from schools that had not yet been reviewed. This suggests that the process has not been embedded within the school system.

During the focus group discussions, principals were asked how they measured performance against the 12 features of effective schools adopted (Section 6.10.7.2). They said that in the absence of any guidance from the Ministry, they had devised their own methods for monitoring improvements. They mentioned such things as comments from visitors and reduction in fights among pupils as possible measurements of change. However, this information is not recorded, so the perceptions are based memory.

Ministry officials were aware of some weaknesses and shortcomings of the system of school appraisal, but showed a surprising level of complacency. They saw the current system as a significant improvement because there had been no other system of school supervision in place and must therefore be an improvement. They were very quick to point out that this is seen very much within the OECS as an example of good practice and a real attempt to tackle the issue of under performance.

Under the current arrangements, it would take at least 10 years to review all schools in St. Lucia. This interval is unduly and unnecessarily long to be meaningful as a process for continuous improvement. It does not allow for adequate monitoring and action to improve schools. At the current rate, the interval amounts to the entire duration of a child's school life! Much too late help them if their school is failing.

Principals expressed some reservations about the model of performance review. There

were concerned that the review team made snap judgements based on information gathered from discussions with selective teachers, without giving principals an opportunity explore issues further and even to challenge some conclusions. They were also concerned that the process only looked at the school at a particular point in time - a snapshot and did not consider other developments.

Another weakness of the system of performance review is that, it contains no provision for monitoring the implementation of recommendations from the review report. It is also noticeable that, the twelve features of effective schools adopted contain no quantitative or measurable characteristics. Further, no standards have been set against which the attainment of effective school features can be measured. The system offers no way of knowing whether changes have taken place and the extent to which schools have become more or less effective. This model focuses entirely on features and offers little by way of processes and the measurement of outcomes.

Performance against each of the 12 effective schools criteria is graded on a 5-point scale, ranging from 'very good' to 'very poor'. There are no criteria for deciding on the grades, so they are largely impressionistic and thus lack consistency to make meaningful comparisons. A glaring omission from the activities of the review team is that direct classroom observations play very little part of the process. This seems rather odd, because the pupil-teacher interface is a major determinant of learning and indicative of the quality of education.

### **8.11 Professional Development of Principals.**

It was shown earlier, that the school effectiveness research suggests that principals have impact significantly on student learning outcomes. The current emphasis on the leadership role of the principal and their professional development and training owes much to the school effectiveness research.

Principals are by far the largest group of senior educational administrators in St. Lucia.



They are expected to undertake very significant roles not only in education, but also in national development as a whole. The routes by which principals entered teaching are shown in Table 30

**Table 30 (Q44) Principals' Routes into Teaching**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Pupil Teacher System	58	80	5	42	63	75
CXC/O/ A levels	12	16	7	56	19	23
Other	2	4	0	0	2	2
Did not respond	1	-		-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

Just over three quarters (76%) of the principals entered teaching through the pupil teacher system, with the proportion in the primary sector being 80% compared to 64% in the secondary sector, providing further evidence that the most teachers entered teaching with very basic qualifications, usually the Standard Six School Leaving Certificate. Nearly a quarter (23%) entered teaching with CXC, O and A level qualifications, with 56% of those secondary principals and 16% of primary principals entering teaching via that route.

Principals in St. Lucia were found to be generally well qualified academically. (Table 31). Over a quarter (28%), held degrees with 7% holding Master's degrees. This compares very favourably with a country such as Cyprus (which has its own university) where a study among principals by Pashiardis (1995), found that 88% of principals were educated only to below degree level, 10% per cent was found to hold a Bachelor's degree and 2% a Master's. The comparable figures for St. Lucia were 21% and 7% respectively.

**Table 31 (Q33). Highest Qualifications Gained by Principals**

	<b>Primary</b>		<b>Secondary</b>		<b>All Schools</b>	
<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Master's degree	2	3	4	33	6	7
Bachelor's degree	11	16	6	50	17	21
Diploma	12	17	0	0	12	15
Teachers' Certificate	43	63	1	8	44	54
Other	1	1	1	9	2	2
Did not respond	4	-		-	3	
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

However, there are disparities across the sectors. While 50% of secondary principals had a Bachelor's degree the figure for primary schools was 16%, and of the 6 principals holding Masters degrees four were in secondary schools.

**Table 32 Cross-tabulation of Routes into Teaching by Highest Qualifications Held (Number of Principals)**

	<b>CXC/O/ A levels</b>	<b>Pupil Teacher System</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Doctorate</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Master's degree</b>	4	2		6
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	6	11	0	17
<b>Diploma</b>	3	9	0	12
<b>Teachers' Certificate</b>	4	38	2	44
<b>Other</b>	1	1	2	2
<b>Did not respond</b>	-	-	-	<b>4</b>
<b>Total No of Responses</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>85</b>

Cross-tabulations of the qualification routes into teaching and highest qualifications gained (Table 32) show that those who entered teaching with CXC/GCE/A levels, held higher academic qualifications (55% of whom held at least a Bachelors degree),

compared to those that entered via the pupil teacher system, of whom only 20% held at least a Bachelor's degree.

This shows that principals in secondary schools are more academically qualified than their counterparts in primary schools. This is largely because secondary principals enter teaching via the academic route and are more likely to pursue higher studies. Moreover, at secondary school level mastery of subject content is regarded as being far more important than at primary school level.

In terms of the gender distribution of qualifications, the cross-tabulation shows that of the 23 principals holding at least a Bachelors degree, 13 were male and 10 female. Masters degrees were evenly distributed between the sexes, but of the 17 principals holding a Bachelors degree, 10 were male. However, as a proportion of principals holding higher academic qualifications males were more highly qualified. Of the 33 male principals that answered the question, 39% held at least a Bachelors degree, and of the 48 females, 20% held similar qualifications.

Over half the principals (55%), said that they had a qualification in management and administration. Table 33. Details of all the qualifications are not available, although it is known that some are first degrees and others diplomas. Unlike academic qualifications, management qualifications are more equitably distributed between primary and secondary schools.

**Table 33 (Q36) Qualifications in Management & Administration**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	35	55	7	58	42	55
No	29	45	5	42	34	45
Did not respond	9	-	0	0	9	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

The cross-tabulation by school (Table 33) shows that the proportion of principals with qualifications in management and administration were evenly distributed between

primary and secondary schools, the proportion being 55% and 58% respectively. In respect of gender, the cross-tabulation shows 32% of male and 44% of female principals held qualifications in management and administration.

There is some discrepancy between the proportion of principals claiming to have qualifications in management and the number claiming to degrees and diplomas. The proportion claiming to have qualifications in management (55%) was higher than the combined proportion of those claiming to hold at least a diploma (43%). This is inconsistent because management qualifications are not generally awarded below diploma level. The discrepancy may be because principals may have included attendance at short and locally certificated courses as management qualifications.

Nearly all principals (93%) said that they had received some form of training in management over the past 3 years. Most of that training was in the form of summer workshops in St. Lucia sponsored and run by Organisation of Canadian Overseas Development (OCOD) as a form of bilateral assistance.

These workshops have covered areas such Instructional Leadership, Guidance and Counselling and Assessment. Principals thought that some of the training was not always relevant and bore no relation to the current or future educational priorities, or what they perceived to be their training and development needs. Principals thought that a workshop on using the personal computer was extremely useful and valuable, but there was just one problem: there were no PCs to go back to in their schools!

A major weakness of these workshops, which must render them even more ineffective, is that they are not based on any analysis of needs. No attempt had been made (Not any involving principals) to find out their training needs. Instead, Ministry officials organise these workshops around things to which they think principals should be “sensitised”. While ministry officials openly acknowledged the importance of training principals in management and administration, there is no coherent training & development strategy or

programme for the training, professional development and updating of principals. As explained earlier, principals are recruited from among senior teachers and their administration and management skills are learned on the job. Without any formal training management training before taking up posts as principals, and some may not receive any training for some considerable time after becoming principals, they tend to develop their own strategies for dealing with the management requirements of their job.

Much is being done locally to provide academic training in management and administration for principals and senior teachers. The main initiative is a 2-year degree programme in Educational Administration at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, validated by the University of the West Indies. The course was established to help upgrade the management skills of serving principals but its operation has been problematic. This was largely because most of the principals at whom the course was targeted failed the university entrance examinations. Consequently, the course struggled for numbers and eventually had to admit senior teachers to make it viable. This has had a deleterious effect on principals. The principals who failed the entrance examination have lost self-confidence, professional respect and self-esteem. Those who have not taken the entrance examination are reluctant to do so, and are deterred from doing so, for fear of failure and the inevitable consequent loss of self-esteem and respect from colleagues and the staff they manage.

The future of these principals must remain in serious doubt. However, the situation provided an excellent opportunity for senior teachers (and the future principals) to train in educational administration and management. This will ensure that many new principals would have already received some training in management and administration. The logical extension of this argument is that, if the education system benefits from having principals who are trained in management and administration, then it is likely to benefit even more, if senior teachers are also trained in management and administration.

The course in Educational Management and Administration is very theoretical and lacks the practical application to enable serving principals to apply the relevant management techniques in managing their schools. As the Dean of the School of Teacher Education remarked:

*"The course is essentially an academic programme with options in administration".*

In spite of this, principals and senior teachers show a great deal of interest in the course. A major reason for this high level of interest is that for many, it is the only opportunity to obtain a degree.

Principals acknowledged the significance and the need for training in management. The vast majority 89% described the need for principals to be trained in management as essential. Table 34.

Although 43% of principals said that they held qualifications in Management and Administration and 93% had received training over the past 3 years, over half (58%), thought that they had not had sufficient training to perform their roles as principals. This suggests that despite the high proportion that had had training, a majority felt ill equipped to do their job. This raises the issue of relevance and practical applications of the training

**Table 34 (Q39). Need for Management Training.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Essential	61	87	12	100	73	89
Very Important	7	10	0	0	7	9
Important	1	1.5	0	0	1	1
Useful	1	1.5	0	0	1	1
Unimportant	0	0	0	0	0	0
Did not respond	3	-	0	0	3	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

A related and highly relevant issue is the competence required for the job. While principals know what the job entails, the job roles are not easily translated into skills and competencies that principals need to develop to do their job competently.

The role of the principal in a modern school is no longer that of the traditional instructional leader. The role now requires all round management and administrative skills. As schools become more empowered, principals will need a wider range of competencies, other than instructional leadership to enable them to manage their schools successfully. Schools need more than competent administrators to be effective in a constantly changing and increasingly global society.

The concept of 'educative leadership' (Leithwood, 1992) is being increasingly used to describe the role of the principal in the Caribbean. Educative leadership in the sense that the leadership exercised in education should be visionary and capable of helping to overcome obstacles to its realisation. It is a means of achieving a shared vision and negotiating what is educationally sound. To quote Newton (1996)

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*visionaries in the context of schools as instruments of social change.*  
(Newton, 1996:46).

Newly appointed principals face particular difficulties. They would have become principals after having taught for many years or a short teaching career combined with a degree. There is no induction or familiarisation and they have to hit the streets running. During the focus group discussions, several principals said that when first appointed, they were very reluctant to share problems with other staff for fear that it might be misconstrued as incompetence.

Principals have no support structures or means of networking to share and exchange ideas and good practice, other than the annual principals' conference.

The age profiles of principals is shown in Table 35. Over two-thirds of principals, 68% are below 50. The age distribution shows that primary school principals are much older than their secondary counterparts, with just over a third (34%) of primary principals being over 50 compared to 17% of secondary principals.

**Table 35 (Q40) Age Group of Principals**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
23-34	4	6	0	0	4	5
35-49	43	60	10	83	53	63
50+	25	34	2	17	27	32
Did not respond	1	-	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

Cross-tabulation with qualifications with age of principals (Table 36 shows that nearly all (90%) of the principals holding a degree are under 50 years of age, and of the 4 principals aged under one held a degree and only two principals over 50 holding degrees.

**Table 36 Cross-tabulation of Age principals with Highest Qualifications Held**

Qualifications	Age Group of Principals			Totals	
	23-34	35-49	50+	No	%
Doctorate	0	0	0	0	0
Master's degree	0	5	1	6	7.5
Bachelor's degree	1	14	1	16	20
Diploma	1	3	3	12	15
Teachers' Certificate	2	27	15	44	55
Other	0	1	1	2	2.5
<b>Total No of valid Responses</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>



This reflects the age profile of principals, and the very recent policy to upgrade their qualifications. The comparative lack of academic qualification among older principals could be due to several factors. If they are well into their fifties, near retirement, and have only a few years of service left, it is unlikely they would be given a scholarship for up to 3 years to obtain a degree, further reducing their remaining period of service to justify the investment. However, if they are in their early fifties with 10-15 years service left, then such an investment could be easier to justify.

Given the age profile and limited opportunity for promotion beyond the position of principal, most principals are expected to remain in their jobs until retirement. Several will be awarded scholarships for overseas study, and upon their return will be deployed in educational administration or other parts of the public sector and a few will resume their principalship. This suggests that it would be wise to invest in their training and development, since the education system would certainly benefit from their long remaining service and from having well-trained and skilled principals and administrators that can contribute to improving the management of the education system for many future years. The length of service of principals is shown in Table 37.

**Table 37 (Q42). Length of Service of Principals**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
11-15 years	1	1	0	0	1	1
16-20 years	6	8	4	33	10	12
21-25 years	16	22	3	25	19	23
25+	49	68	5	42	54	64
Did not respond	1	-	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100</b>

The vast majority (87%) of principals have been in teaching for at least 20 years, with primary principals having much longer service. While the proportion primary principals

with over 20 years service stood at 67%, the figure for primary principals was 90%. The difference is due to several factors. Primary principals would have starting teaching much younger, as pupil teachers, compared to a majority (55%) of secondary principals, who would have started to teach much older, after completing GCE/CXC/A levels, and some would have done teacher training before starting their teaching career.

Approximately 40% had been in their present post for over 12 years and 20% more than 17 years (Table 38). However, a large minority, 38% had been in post for less than 5 years. Some of the more recent appointments were due to the expansion of education from the late 1970s resulting in the building of many new schools.

**Table 38(Q43). Time Spent in Current Post.**

	Primary		Secondary		All Schools	
Response	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Under 5 years	26	36	6	50	32	38
6-11 years	16	22	2	17	18	22
12-16 years	15	21	2	17	17	20
17-22 years	9	13	1	8	10	12
Over 22 years	6	8	1	8	7	8
Did not respond	1	-	0	0	1	-
Total	73	100	12	100	85	100

The length of service and time spent in current post suggests that, principals in St. Lucia are very experienced. The 75% who entered teaching via the pupil teacher system would have started teaching about age 16, so most would have had considerable teaching experience before becoming principals, generally when they are in their thirties. A combination of experienced principals, nearly two-thirds of whom are under 50 years of age and most likely to stay in post until augur well for effective and efficient management of the education system in the future.

## 8.12 Conclusions

The evidence emerging in relation to the operation of the major policies in educational management and administration in St. Lucia suggests that they have been problematic. It revealed serious weakness that must be addressed, satisfactorily if the system is to be

effective in achieving its policy objectives.

The dual church and state control of education remains an unresolved issue. The conflict resulting from this dual control is likely to be to the detriment of education. The church has a role to play in religious and moral education and should continue to do so. However, it also has some degree of control over denominational schools, it is not prepared to relinquish. The *Concordat*, defines the respective roles of the church and state in education needs to be more widely known to begin to establish common understanding before the conflict can be resolved.

The lack of consultation and a general failure of the Ministry of Education to communicate policy effectively, have contributed to policy failures. The failure can be attributed to poor implementation caused by the lack of a framework for policy analysis and recognition of the need to carefully manage change.

Planning at school level is rudimentary, and a planning culture needs to be embedded in schools. A national planning framework with clear guidance is needed to help schools plan, set objectives including targets, and monitor performance as part of the national framework.

The lack of use of performance indicators other than examination pass rates means that there is no real sense of how well or how badly the education system is performing. While much is made of the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system, much of what happens in practice is paying lip service to these matters, because no indicators of effectiveness, efficiency or quality are in systematic use.

The adoption of 'school effectiveness' principles and the introduction of School Performance Review are brave and creative attempts to find ways of assessing and improving the performance of the education system. However, the performance review process is rudimentary and lacks consistency and robustness, which may call its reliability

and validity into question. The erratic production of review reports and failure to monitor or follow-up action points may render the whole exercise futile and a waste of scarce resources with huge opportunity cost.

The adoption of 'school effectiveness principles' is a clear example of external influences and policy borrowing. The authorities were bold in adopting a principle based on such contentious and conflicting research evidence. While embedding the features will focus minds, the initiative has serious weaknesses. One of the major weaknesses is the lack of any clear sense of how the largely mechanistic features can be translated into a dynamic process linked to improvement, compounded by the absence of any performance indicators or instruments to gauge performance against those features.

The general failure to set up Boards of Management successfully can be attributed to two major weaknesses: the lack of clarity about the role, powers, and responsibilities of the Board, lack of consultation and poor implementation strategy, exacerbated by the absence of a policy analysis framework. Board members were unclear of their role and neither were they empowered to discharge them effectively.

The leadership and management roles of the principal are regarded as crucial for school improvement, yet their powers and authority do not reflect the role and responsibility accorded them in national development. Transferring some functions to the level of the school would greatly empower principals and their Boards, and improve the quality of decision making at school level. However, there is reluctance by the decision-makers to relinquish such powers. If the educational ambitions are to be achieved, strong and supportive partnerships must be formed among the key players. Principals as senior educational practitioners would be expected to have a major involvement in educational policy making, and greater responsibilities and power to decide how their school is managed.

The training and development of principals lacks the coherence and relevance required. The training programmes on offer do not provide adequate opportunities for principals to develop the necessary skills, and demonstrate the competencies needed in their jobs. The training also lacks cultural relevance in that it is still based largely on foreign models designed for entirely different educational environment with limited application.

The age profile of the principalship, combined with limited alternative career paths or progression, provide opportunities for strategic investment in their professional development and updating to establish a cadre of well-trained administrators and principals who will serve the education system well into the future. It is an opportunity that should not be missed.

in education. (World Bank Education  
Strategy, 1999).

## CHAPTER 9

### **Responding to the Challenges of Educational Management and Administration: An Organisational and Policy Framework**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the findings from the study and proposes a framework for responding to the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia.

The chapter is presented in two parts. Part 1 draws together the main conclusions from the study and their implications for educational development. Part 2 develops the organisational and policy framework for responding to the challenges facing educational management and administration.

#### **Part 1. Summary of Main Findings and Implications.**

#### **9.2 Overview and Rationale**

Education in St. Lucia has been characterised by a centrally controlled system, educational dependence, poor quality of basic education, low levels of attainment, weak supervision of the education system, ineffectual school governance, weak policy implementation and the absence of a coherent training and development strategy for educational administrators. The effective and efficient management of the education

system has been identified as crucial to improving the performance of the education system. Consequently, policy initiatives have focused on the management and administration of the education system including the training of educational administrators. However, despite continuing attempts at reform the problems persist. Moreover, much of the literature on educational development in small states suggests that smallness imposes certain constraints that adversely affect educational development.

Against this background, the study set out to examine whether educational policies and practices in St. Lucia have the capability and potential to meet successfully, the challenges of educational administration. In particular it sought to:

1. Identify the forces that have and continue to influence and shape educational policy and practice in St. Lucia.
2. Examine the implications of smallness and dependency for educational management and administration in St. Lucia.
3. Analyse the education system in St. Lucia focusing on its organisation, structure, management, policy formulation and implementation, performance, school management & governance and the training of educational administrators.
4. Examine decentralisation as a major strategy in educational administration in St. Lucia, assess its appropriateness, and analyse the implications for small states.
5. Develop a framework for formulating responses to the challenges of educational management and administration in St. Lucia.

The study attempted to provide a greater understanding of educational administration

in a small state, to assess current developments and their potential to meet current and future needs for managing a modern education system.

The study involved conducting a thorough review of the emerging literature on small states to establish the current state of knowledge of educational development in small states.

A comprehensive analysis of current administrative and management practices in St. Lucia was conducted to assess their potential to meet the challenges of educational administration. This analysis relied predominantly on the perceptions of policy makers and practitioners in St. Lucia. Attempts to improve the management and administration of the education system through structural and organisational reforms, school governance, school management and supervision are subjected to detailed analysis. It is the first time that such analyses have been carried out in St. Lucia.

### **9.3 Factors Influencing Policy and Practice**

The education system in St. Lucia is subject to external influences especially from North America and Europe. Educational dependence, colonial ties, globalisation and regional co-operation and integration are major influence on policy and practice.

The history of the region was shown to be a major factor in determining the nature of educational development. However, historical and contemporary developments such as globalisation have conspired to influence policy and practice, which are not always in the best interest of the country.

The colonial inheritance is still very strong. It has been further strengthened in the post-independence period by neo-colonialism. Even where governments have striven towards self-determination, it has been problematic.



Educational dependence, a consequence of the interplay of several factors including colonialism, smallness and globalism has left St. Lucia very vulnerable to external influences. This vulnerability is reflected in the uncritical importation of foreign models of educational practice, often unworkable and reliability on foreign assistance resulting in the donor control of educational projects. There is also a prevailing and implicit assumption that small states are microcosms of large states, and the policy prescription has been to implement scale down versions of policies designed for large western countries.

Dependence is prevalent in the areas human resources, finance, curriculum, pedagogy and educational policy. Policy recommendations tend to reflect developments in the West and consultants' own experiences, which are often inappropriate for the local context.

This has implications for the continued development of the education system. There is a need for decisions to be taken about how to deal with the issue of educational dependence and the resulting influence on policy. Not only is de-linking from the international economy not a realistic option, but globalisation also helps to undermine any such attempts. Yet, there are no policy objectives to reduce, if not eliminate dependence in education. However, in spite of these constraints, there is much that can be done to reduce dependence in education. There is scope for action to build local human resource capacity, greater pooling of resources at the regional level, further integration of educational activities and very importantly make a paradigm shift in the psyche from dependence to self-reliance.

Global changes and the history of the region suggest, that small states like St. Lucia may not be able to escape wholly, the consequences of educational dependence. The only realistic option is manage dependency to its advantage by maximising the benefits and reducing the adverse effects of these relationships.

#### **9.4 Implications of Scale for Educational Development.**

The literature review (Chapter 3) showed that educational studies on small states have focused mainly on how scale and its associated features such as isolation and dependence affect educational development. This study, while recognising the constraints resulting from small size also emphasises the opportunities. Smallness was seen as presenting particular opportunities for getting things done quickly, making viable, projects that would not have been feasible in large states because of the sheer scale of the resources that might be required.

Small size often means limited resources: minerals, human and capital. The size of St. Lucia limits its capacity to develop certain industries because the potential size of the undertaking would not make it viable. Size also affects the shape and structure of the education systems. Small education systems like St. Lucia are generally lacking in the provision of tertiary education. While the system of community colleges now provides an increased tertiary programme, individual small states do not have universities, because they can neither afford it, nor have sufficient numbers of students or students and staff to make them viable.

The limited absorptive capacity of the economy has resulted in a "brain drain" from the Caribbean to North America and UK in particular, creating skill shortage in highly skilled areas including educational administration. Attempts to address the brain drain and associated skill shortages have included the hiring of expatriates, attracting nationals back from overseas and local capacity building, but these have had only limited success.

#### **9.5 Decentralisation in Small States**

The arguments in favour of decentralisation, although very persuasive, are coming under increasing criticism. What is patently clear, however, is that decentralisation is not a panacea for the ills of educational management and administration. Even where decentralisation has taken place, it was shown to be fraught with difficulties, not least, because implementation has been problematic. Its effectiveness was found to be

inconclusive, casting doubts on its purported benefits.

It was argued that conditions in St. Lucia did not favour decentralisation and concluded that it was inappropriate for small states. It was therefore unsurprising, that the attempts at decentralisation had not been successful.

It was argued earlier (Chapter 7), that where the population of a small state is widely dispersed over a large land area, its communities isolated, human and capital resources are available and has a history of community development and very importantly, the political will to share power, there will be a greater tendency towards decentralisation. If, on the other hand, the state is relatively compact, has good internal communication, a limited resource base, a tradition of centrally controlled development, lacks the political will to share power, and not heavily dependent on foreign assistance, there would be a tendency towards centralisation.

The programme of decentralising public services was shown to have design flaws, compounded by poor implementation strategy. This has implications for the future organisation of public services and education in particular. The whole programme of decentralisation is in need of review: regional councils, school districts and school governance.

However, it is recognised that even in small states sub units may be required. But, what is not required in St. Lucia are additional tiers or layers administrative bureaucracy, which will neither improve decision-making nor improve educational achievements. However, there are many positive benefits that can be gained from some level of decentralisation, even in a small state like St. Lucia. Developing appropriate structures and policies to achieve meaningful community participation in public decision-making especially in education, remains a major challenge.

## **9.6 Policy and Practice in Educational Management and Administration**

The study showed that the operation of policy and practice faced major problems and difficulties, which must be addressed successfully, to meet the needs of a modern education system and achieve the type of outcomes expected.

Policymaking was found to be confined to a few senior officers, with no consultation with stakeholders and especially those that are supposed to implement the policies. There was no policy ownership and policy implementation was particularly weak, exacerbated by the absence of a policy analysis framework.

The dual state and church control of primary education caused confusion, and a persistent state of tension exists between the church and state. This state of affairs is damaging to the education system, but the suspicion and distrust that exist between the church and state over the church's role in education makes a resolution intractable.

Attempts to improve school performance by adopting policies based on effective school research is to be commended, in as much the problem is recognised and some attempt is being made to address underachievement. However, the problems of disentangling cause from effect, and absence of any performance indicators for measuring achievement against any of the features of schools effectiveness remain.

While much is made of the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the education system, no efficiency or effectiveness indicators are in use. Moreover, examination results being the main and only performance indicator for most people, gives a distorted view of the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

The system of School Performance Review is a brave and welcome attempt to assess the performance of the education system. However, the process is rudimentary and lacks consistency and robustness, which may call its reliability and validity into question. The lack of an agreed standard for reviews, untrained reviewers, erratic

production of review reports and the failure to monitor the implementation of action plans, are major weaknesses in the system.

The attempt to increase community participation by setting up Boards of Management is to be welcomed, even if it has been unsuccessful. The failure can be attributed to two major weaknesses: the lack of clarity about the role, powers, and responsibilities of the Board and the lack of an implementation strategy.

The authorities consider the leadership and management roles of the principal are regarded as crucial for school improvement, but there is some reluctance on the part of the authorities to empower principals to exercise that role influentially. If the educational ambitions are to be achieved, strong and supportive partnerships must be formed between the major stakeholders.

The lack of any coherent training programme for principals and educational administrators, presents an enormous challenge in securing appropriately qualified staff in sufficient numbers, to perform the full range of management and administrative functions. Moreover, the training often lacks cultural relevance in that; it is still based largely on foreign models designed for entirely different educational environments.

The age profile of principals, combined with limited alternative career paths or progression, means that they will serve the education system well into the future. Therefore, investment in appropriate training is likely to bring enormous benefits to the education system.

## **Part 2: Organisational and Policy Frameworks**

### **9.7 Towards an Organisation and Policy Framework**

The management and administration of the education system, the quality of education and the role of the principal have emerged as a major issue in educational development in small postcolonial states. Consequently, reforms over the past decades have focused on issues such as efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money, school governance and the training of educational administrators.

The attempts at educational reform have involved the search for new ways of organising and managing the system to achieve the required improvements in educational performance and addressing issues such as access, equity and relevance. The requirements of a modern education system are clear.

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*of finance. (OREALC, 1994:3)*

However, achieving that type education system has been elusive, but the quest continues.

### **9.8 The Proposed Framework: An Overview**

The proposed framework borrows conceptually from the existing administrative structures and suggests changes, to address the major administrative and management challenges. The proposed framework will enable the system to be managed strategically, efficiently, effectively and responsive to a dynamic educational environment.

The three 'pillars' of a good education system also underpin the framework: access, quality and delivery<sup>28</sup>. Access to ensure that students are ready to learn, a supportive environment is available and they have access to learning provision. Quality in the form of relevant curricula, motivated staff and appropriate teaching and learning process. Delivery is to be characterised by good governance, adequate resources and sound evaluation. .

There are two main dimensions to the proposed framework: an organisational dimension and a policy dimension.

The framework acknowledges the constraints and parameters within which the education system operates. It also builds on and the strengths of the existing system and embraces the principle of competence and subsidiarity

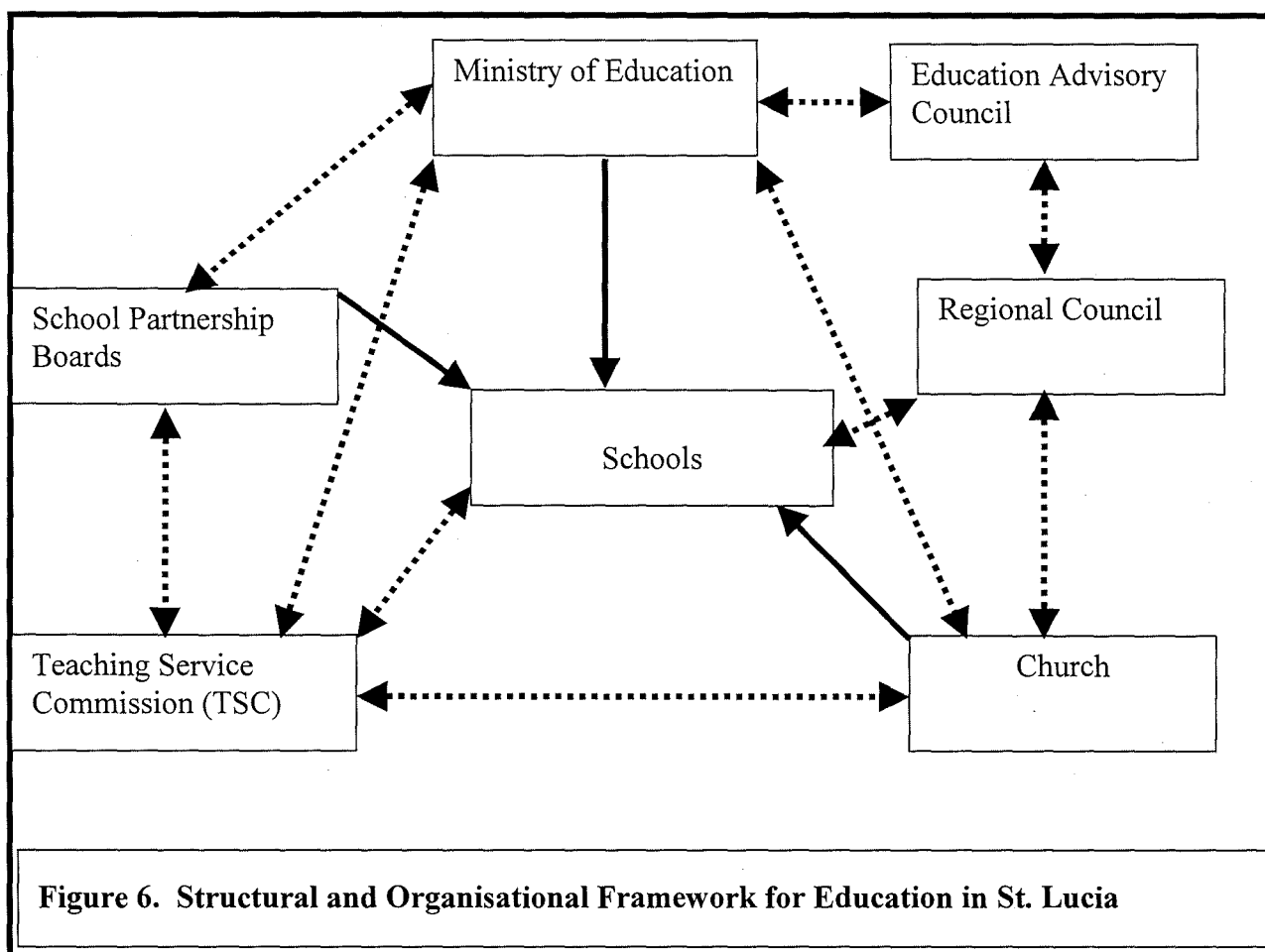
The framework includes new components, and brings in other existing structural components such as the Regional Council into the educational arena. A major proposal is the rationalisation of regional authorities and school districts including a review of their boundaries. As argued earlier, there are too many administrative units, some with overlapping roles and functions resulting in confusion and inefficiencies in both planning and the provision of services.

## **9.9 The Structural and Organisational Framework**

The proposed framework is shown in Figure 6. The arrows indicate the direction and flow of communication. The solid lines represent areas of greatest influence and in some cases accountability, as between school and the Ministry of education. The broken lines show areas of little or no influence, where the communication is largely consultative or to inform. The specific policy issues that underpin the framework are examined in Section 9.10.

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28 See World Bank Education Sector Strategy Paper, 1999.



### 9.9.1 The School

The school is at the heart of the system and should be the ultimate beneficiaries of the proposals. The school has links with the largest number of components within the framework, which should not be surprising, given that it is the main focus of educational activities.

Besides its current role, and the functions that can be performed through its Partnership Board, much can be done by the school to direct its development. School planning can become a routine activity. A planning cycle could be established and schools required to produce annual school plans with clear objectives and targets. Very importantly, the plan should also be responsive and sensitive to any local needs. The school plan should be endorsed by the Partnership Board and approved by the



Ministry of Education. Schools would also be required to produce an annual report that includes progress against milestones, objectives and targets

### **9.9.2 The Ministry of Education**

The Ministry of Education retains its current role in providing strategic direction and impetus for the development of education. It continues to have responsibility for education policy, curriculum, resource allocation, teacher appointments, training supervision and school plant and building.

### **9.9.3 The Education Advisory Council**

This is a new component of the education system. The Education Advisory Council will provide independent expert advice to the Minister of Education. Its membership is to be drawn from the wider community, especially from among those outside education. It should comprise stakeholders such as employers, teachers, academics and community representatives.

The Advisory Council will provide a forum for wide ranging and challenging debates to improve the quality of decisions. This will provide balance in the prevailing environment of policy making in which Ministers rely solely on Ministry officials for advice. Further, Ministry officials are often too closely associated with the issues to provide impartial and objective advice. What is often required in policy making, is alternative perspectives and choices of policy options, which the Advisory Council will be well placed to provide.

The Council, in partnership with others (Ministry of Education, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College) could also play an important role in developing the research capacity in St. Lucia to help inform policymaking.

Such a body would also help achieve the major objective of increasing democratic participation in education and help to build alliances and partnerships with the community at large and stakeholders in education

#### **9.9.4 Regional Authorities**

It is proposed that Regional Authorities are rationalised and their boundaries made coterminous with those of the school districts. What follows therefore, anticipates these changes.

The Regional Authority could become the entity for local involvement in education, and a valuable forum for discussion and consultation on educational matters. The views, issues and recommendations from these discussions can then be channelled through to government via the Ministry of Education. Educational matters could be dealt with by a subgroup of the Regional Council to give it greater prominence and focus.

If this is to work effectively, the operation of the regional councils must also change. They are government controlled at present, and seen very much as an organ of government. Ownership will have to be given to the local communities so that they play a full and influential part in the operation of the councils and in reporting to government.

The identity of the regional authorities should be made more meaningful by describing them in terms of direction or location (Eastern, North Western or a combination of the names of the major places within the authority).

#### **9.9.5 School Partnership Boards**

School Partnership Boards are to be set up for all schools to replace Boards of Management. The term Partnership is used to here reflect the intended nature of the relationship between the school and the communities its serves. The partnership is to involve all key players and stakeholders: parents, pupils, community organisations, business and government.

The Partnership Board has the simple, yet major challenge to help improve the school performance and pupil attainment in particular, by drawing on support and resources

from the wider community. It would also present an opportunity to build a genuine partnership and a forum for mobilising support for school improvement.

Partnership Board could be empowered to take more decisions about school affairs. It could be given powers to deal matters such as student discipline, more involvement in staff discipline, budgets (excluding salaries) and school maintenance, but this should be subject to more detailed consideration.

The members of the School Partnership Board should include: ministry official, principal, teachers, pupils, parents, representatives from business and community groups such as Mothers & Fathers Group, Credit Union and community movements such as Journen Creole. The school through its Partnership Board should have the power to recommend staffing appointments to the Teaching Service Commission.

While the Partnership Board will be empowered by the Ministry to discharge certain functions, the important post of Chair must be elected by Partnership Board members, not appointed by the Minister, to avoid the suspicion of government appointees being seen as 'spies'. It is also important that the Chair is held by someone with credibility with the community and the school. It is essential that Partnership Board members receive appropriate training to ensure that they fully understand their roles and responsibilities and help them discharge their role effectively.

#### **9.9.6 Teaching Service Commission (TSC)**

The Teaching Service Commission would continue its present role in the management and administration of the recruitment and appointments process for teachers. It will have a direct relationship with the Ministry of Education on whose behalf it undertakes teaching appointments and the administration of scholarships. It will also relate directly to the schools for which it has responsibility for staffing appointments, and provide ongoing support and training in staffing and human resource issues.

The TSC can also play an additional role in providing training and support for principals to deal with staffing and personnel matters. It can also have a role in developing and monitoring procedures for staff recruitment and appointment. The appointments process would need to be overhauled to include panel interviews for appointing teachers to ensure impartiality. The Commission should also have responsibility for establishing adequate mechanisms for communicating with schools and church on matters of staffing.

#### **9.9.7 The Church**

The church has always had, and will probably continue to have a role to play in education in St. Lucia. However, that role requires both agreement and clarification.

The church should continue to have the responsibility for providing religious and spiritual education in denominational schools. However, the extent, form and shape of the church's input should be decided through discussions between the Church and the Ministry of Education.

The church should therefore, be divested of its responsibility and power to act as school manager, so that denominational schools will be managed in the same way as state schools. The church through its Education Board of Management and parish priests should continue to be involved in school affairs through its representation on School Partnership Boards.

The Church is likely to resist any move to dilute its involvement in school management, but the current situation cannot be allowed to continue and the state must grasp that particular nettle in the interest of education. A starting point for this process could be a review of the *Concordat*.

## 9.10 Policy Directions

This section presents outlines of future policy directions to underpin and link the components of the framework outlined above.

Before considering policy analysis it is useful to provide a working definition of policy. Haddad's (1995) functional definition of policy will suffice. He defined policy as

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*implementation of previous decisions. (Haddad, 1995:18.)*

Policies can vary enormously in scope from those that are issue specific, aimed at addressing a specific and narrowly defined issue, to those that are strategic, aimed at broad issues that involve national priorities and matters of resource allocation. It two main dimensions: who does what (i.e. the actors) and how? i.e. the actors and how they arrive at decisions.

The policies to underpin the structural framework developed earlier, for the effective and efficient management of the education system are outlined next.

### 9.10.1 Educational Research

The need to develop a local research capacity is overwhelming. It is needed in St. Lucia, not only to conduct research into local educational issues to add to local knowledge and inform policy, but also to critically examine the theories, conceptions and assumptions drawn mainly from the thinking in large industrialised countries that may not be appropriate.

The Education Advisory Council in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Sir Arthur Lewis Community College could spearhead the efforts to develop a research capacity by formulating the strategy.

Increasing the research capability will not only help reduce the reliance on foreign research but importantly also counter the belief that the best models are those from industrialised countries, who largely determine what is legitimate research knowledge. A local research capacity will begin to develop both an acknowledgement and appreciation of ability to mobilise local resources to address local needs. However, if this is to be effective, it is essential that the body leading this effort have some degree of independence, or it will risk being emasculated by government bureaucracy.

### **9.10.2 School Performance Measurement**

Standardised assessments should be developed in schools and underpinned by performance targets. Targets and minimum performance levels could be set in crucial areas such as literacy, numeracy and science, especially for primary schools. This would be an important step towards measuring the effectiveness of primary education.

The performance measures could be used to measure actual performance against standards and targets. In addition, it would help identify failing schools or those experiencing problems to allow the necessary assistance to be provided.

While examination successes is likely to remain the major performance indicator for most St. Lucians, there is a need to have more comprehensive performance indicators such as enrolment rates, dropout rates, staff student ratios could be also be used vis à vis examination results. Moreover, performance indicators are needed to measure and monitor progress against the 12 characteristics of effectiveness schools that have been adopted, and on which the school performance review process is based.

### **9.10.3 School Performance Review**

The weaknesses in the current system of school performance review need strengthening. The training of those conducting the review and the management of the process are two of the areas that need strengthening.

It is essential that they those conducting the review are capable of making informed and professional judgements about the performance of schools and provide appropriate feedback. The current practice of putting review teams together on an ad hoc basis should be abolished. Instead, a professionally trained team of reviewers should be established to carry out this role.

The reliability and consistency of the process could be improved by ensuring greater accountability and more effective management, especially in establishing mechanisms to ensure that reports are produced at the end of visits and very importantly, that they are *actually* written, *sent* to schools. It is equally important that action plans are produced and their implementation monitored and reviewed. The Education Officer can play a major supporting role in helping schools produce, implement and review their action plans

The review process can be improved by broadening the scope of the review, to include other pertinent aspects of school operation. It should include school planning, community partnerships, management & leadership, classroom observation, resources and student attainment.

The frequency of the reviews could be shortened, because at the current rate, it would take ten years to review all schools. The interval between inspections is too long to serve as a basis for continuous school improvement. It should be about three years and certainly no more than four. The process should also allow for interim reviews, which can look at specific aspects of school operation that also helps to keep performance on the agenda as on ongoing process.

The method of arriving at assessment grades is a major weakness that needs strengthening. Clear criteria and guidelines are needed to provide a basis to help reviewers arrive at the grades. This is likely to result in better understanding, transparency and consistency in the process.

#### **9.10.4 Human Resources**

The lack of a pool of skilled personnel in critical areas was cited as a major problem in small systems. It was also shown that despite continuing efforts the problem remains unresolved. Resolving this critical problem requires both expedient and long term strategy.

A coherent and comprehensive strategy for human resource development is urgently needed to address the problems highlighted in this study. Responsibility for this critical area of development could be given to a senior official within the Ministry who will be responsible for planning and co-ordinating human resources development (No one currently holds that brief). The remit could include the development of all areas of human resources development including teacher education, training of principals and educational administrators.

There is a need for joined-up thinking between the Ministry of Education and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, to ensure that provision reflects and responds to skills needs. It is unclear, whether, and the extent to which course provision is informed by labour markets needs and the imperatives of globalisation. Surely, for an organisation that is publicly funded and the only tertiary institution in the country, notwithstanding the arguments about academic freedom, it has an imperative to respond to this most critical area of human resource development.

The policy on scholarships is in urgent need of review. The current policy has several damaging consequences. The government finances very expensive overseas training at its cost, and to the financial benefit of western countries. Considerable sums are spent in sending nationals to train overseas. Many do not return (despite contractual conditions) resulting in a permanent loss to the economy, which gets hardly any benefit from such investment. The other weakness is the choice of subjects supported. There is a preponderance to support scholarships in the social science as opposed to scientific or technical and vocational areas that are crucial for the development of the economy.



The long-term objective surely, must be to develop a cadre of managers in educational administration at both national and regional levels. While the national pool in St. Lucia and OECS may be small, it is much larger at the regional and Caribbean level. This suggests a need for much greater regional co-operation in taking joint action for human resource development in labour market research and forecasting and co-ordination and harmonisation of policies at a regional level.

The basis for attracting nationals back is in need of review. It was shown earlier, that attempts to attract their nationals back were not succeeding. While nationals living and working overseas find the idea of making a positive contribution to their countries of origin quite attractive, they find the terms currently on offer too risky.

A shift in emphasis from trying to attract nationals back to resettle, to encouraging them to return work on short to medium term assignments might be more successful. The government could arrange to have access to or develop its own database of the available expertise. (*The Commonwealth Secretariat has such a database*) If, and when the expertise is required, negotiations can take place with the individuals concerned and their employing organisation with a view to seconding staff concerned staff for particular assignments or length of time. This would be of mutual benefit. It would overcome the problems of insecurity and uncertainty that prevent nationals from returning to work or resettle and the government would have access to the skills and expertise that it needs. It is also highly likely that some will decide to stay permanently.

#### **9.10.5 The Training & Professional Development of Principals**

The study concluded that there was a need for a coherent training policy is required for the recruitment, training and development of educational administrators, especially for principals. The emphasis should be on local capacity building at national and regional levels.

The policy aim should therefore, be to ensure that all principals are trained and acquire the competencies deemed necessary to perform their jobs competently. The job of the principal revolves increasingly around managing people, resources, and relationships. They need to be skilled and competent in these besides any academic training that they may have undertaken.

The degree programme in Educational Administration and Management at the community college should be abolished, and replaced by competence based training to provide opportunities for principals, as managers to develop and demonstrate their competence. This would necessitate a clear definition and statement of the competencies required by principals<sup>29</sup>.

The method of training and modes of attendance need to be reformed to achieve cost efficiencies. The practice of offering serving principals two years full time study at the community college should be reviewed, as it seems unnecessarily costly to the taxpayers. Not only do principals receive their salaries, but replacement costs are also incurred. A more efficient and effective mode of training for serving principals could involve using varying modes of attendance such as bloc release, residential and distance learning. These options would enable principals to remain in their schools, so replacement costs would not be incurred. An added advantage of this approach is that it would require principals to invest more of their own time and resources into their training and development.

Besides the professional qualification of principals, staff development needs to be ongoing. It is also important that such activities are informed by systematic analyses of needs that necessarily involve principals.

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<sup>29</sup> In England Wales, the New Professional Qualification for Headteachers (NPQH) is an example of a qualification that defines competencies and standards for Headteachers.

#### **9.10.6 Managing Dependence in Education**

It is unrealistic to expect small countries like St. Lucia to break away from the dependency syndrome. The policy option seems to be one of balance. The critical issue is striking a balance or trade off between the costs and benefits of dependency. Even if there is such a balance to be struck, finding that balance and critically, implementing policies to maintaining it is going to be extremely difficult to achieve.

Dependence is a consequence of the interplay of several factors and no single policy or policy in a single area can tackle it successfully. Some of the policy directions given earlier especially in respect of human resource development and research will contribute towards the reduction of dependence. However, further policy directions are needed and are provided below.

The adoption of foreign models should also be critically appraised in respect of their socio-cultural relevance and their implications for small scale. In addition, policies should be subject to systematic policy analysis like the one outlined in the next section.

Much has been done to produce textbooks and curriculum materials that reflect Caribbean life. This has been successful at primary and at secondary level to a lesser extent, but tertiary education continues to be dependent on foreign texts. Advantage should be taken of the advances in information and communication technology (ICT) and desk top publishing in particular, provide opportunities for further reducing dependence in the area of textbooks, other learning materials and research. It is important that that there is an end to the current situation, in which educational administrators being trained in public administration at the University of the West Indies) use textbooks on public administration in the United States.

There is a need for strategies to raise the level of awareness about dependence and its particular impact on education. At the regional level efforts should continue to pool resources and undertake joint projects. The OECS could develop regional institutions

to integrate functions such as teacher training, the training of educational administrators and harmonisation of the education systems.

At the national level, the government needs to create greater awareness of dependence and how it affects St. Lucia, and this may necessitate new research. The Education Advisory Council could play an important role in research and raising awareness of the issues. There is a further need for a clear policy objective in response to the challenges of dependence. It is important to know government's views and position on dependency and whether it perceives it as a problem, and if so, what the strategy is.

## **9.11 A Framework for Policy Analysis**

One of the main conclusions of the study was that much of the policy failures could be attributed to the lack of a policy analysis framework. This section outlines a policy analysis framework to help improve policy (Figure 7). It is based on the general models of policy analysis (Carley, 1980; Hill, 1993, Haddad, 1995) adapted to the St. Lucian context.

Conceptually, policy analysis is a cyclical process involving a number sequentially structured processes in policy making. They range from the initial identification of the problem to the evaluation of the effects of the policy.

The cycle contains several elements of policy analysis that need to be considered in policymaking. It is important that all the processes are followed to ensure that all factors are considered. Very importantly, they are interdependent, so and each successive stage relies on the outcomes of the preceding stages.

### **9.11.1 Analysis of Existing Situation**

The policy analysis process starts with an analysis of the existing situation and identification of the problems. This is pertinent to obtain an understanding of the context and constraints within which the policy will operate. Consequently, it must analyse the economic, social, cultural and political factors and how they are likely to

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**Figure 7. A Framework for Policy Analysis in St. Lucia**

*(Source: Adapted from Haddad, 1995 and Cheng & Cheung 1995)*

impact on policy. In the context of St. Lucia the issue of small size and the impending loss of preferential treatment for bananas in the European Union are likely to impact significantly on future policy.

#### **9.11.2 Policy Formulation**

The actual formulation of policies requires careful analysis of a number of factors, and there are different methods of generating policy. There is the *systematic* method, which involves a comprehensive process of data generation and formulation and prioritisation of policy options.

There is the *incremental* method that seeks an expedient solution to problems especially if they have been the subjects of public debate. In this situations policymakers feel under some compulsion to provide answers and solutions (not necessarily the right ones) to maintain both their credibility and legitimacy.

There is also the *importation model* in which international agencies and foreign consultants propose solutions applied in their own countries.

#### **9.11.3 Evaluating Policy Options**

Once the policy options have been formulated, they are evaluated to select the most appropriate ones. The choice is made in terms their desirability, feasibility and affordability. Desirability in the sense of the likely impact of the policy options on the society and stakeholders in particular. Affordability, in the sense of the ability to generate the resources needed to carry out the policy. Feasibility, in considering whether the resources are available to carry out the project.

#### **9.11.4 Policy Decision**

Once the policy has been evaluated, then an option has to be selected. The policy selected will be based on a balanced judgement founded on the guiding principles of affordability, desirability and feasibility. Other considerations might be whether all the stages have been analysed, whether the policy is consistent or in line with policies in

other areas of the public sector or education in particular and whether implementation is plausible.

#### **9.11.5 Policy Implementation**

Policy implementation is the most crucial phase of policy analysis because poor implementation can easily negate everything achieved in the previous phases. It is the critical area that transforms concepts and ideas into practice. The critical thing to have in place is an implementation schedule - a schedule of human resources, financial resources, physical objects and timetable detailing who is to do what and by when.

One approach is to phase in the implementation, so that the next phase starts, only after satisfactory implementation of the preceding phase. Implementation can also be tested through pilots to provide opportunities to identify problems and make improvements before going national.

#### **9.11.6 Policy Evaluation**

Once the policy is operational there must be some means of finding out whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. The success or otherwise of the policy will be the extent to which the desirable changes have been achieved. Failure to achieve intended outcomes may not necessarily be due to faults in the policy. It could also be due to personnel failings, under-funding, the lack of monitoring and failure to take corrective action, but the monitoring and feedback processes should reveal these. If the policy is found not to be achieving its objectives, there may be no alternative but to abandon it altogether.

However, policy analysis should be an iterative process going through design, planning, implementation impact and redesign.

## **9.12 A New Vision For Education**

While the proposed framework for educational management and administration could meet the challenges facing education in St. Lucia in the short to medium term, there is a need for a fresh long-term vision of education that addresses the imperatives of globalisation. A vision that relates to the aspirations of the people locally and globally, and around which collective energies can be mobilised to ensure that it is realised. This seems particularly opportune at the start of the new millennium.

The implications of globalisation and other international developments must be taken into account in planning education for the future. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling that the EU must end the preferential treatment given to bananas from the Caribbean is particularly poignant to educational development. It also presents an opportunity for radical structural economic and educational reforms. The reform might like to give serious consideration at transforming the economy from one which has been based on exploiting limited natural resources to a strategy based on developing human resources to gain a competitive advantage, given the increasing importance and prominence of the knowledge-driven economy and the opportunities available through globalisation.

The starting point could be appointing a National Commission on Education, to report on the state of education and make recommendations on the type of education system that will be required to meet the challenges and aspirations of the people of St. Lucia in the 21st. Century.



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## APPENDIX 1

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN ST. LUCIA

Please complete this questionnaire by ticking your choice of answers from the alternatives given. Where there may be answers other than or in addition to those shown, please write your answers in the space provided. (The shaded boxes are for office use only)

**Your responses to this questionnaire are absolutely confidential. Information identifying the respondents will not be disclosed under any circumstances.**

- 1 How is your school classified by the Ministry of Education Labour and Culture?  
Tick box

Primary		1
Senior Primary		2
Combined		3
Senior Secondary		4
Comprehensive		5
Infant		6
Other		7

- 2 In which Education/School District is your school located?

1		1
2		2
3		3
4		4
5		5
6		6

- 3 How would you describe the current use of space in your school?

Spare capacity exists		1
Space is fully utilised		2
Overcrowding exists		3

- 4 Does the school have a Board of Management?

Yes		1
No		2

- 5 If you answered 'No' to Question 4, when do you expect one to be set up?

Within 12 months		1
Within 12-18 months		2
Within 18-24 months		3
Other(please specify)		4

6. In addition to the School Boards of Management(if one exists) what other formal links are there between the school and the local community?

PTA		1
Student Council		2
Other(please specify below)		3

- 7 Do you think that Boards of Management are a good idea?

Yes		1
No		2

- 8 Do you understand fully, the role of Boards of Management?

Yes		1
No		2

- 9 Do the teachers in your school understand the role of the Boards of Management?

Yes		1
No		2
Don't know		3

10. What effects would you say that Boards of Management have had on the operation of schools? (You may select as many answers as you wish)

Improved the management		1
No effect on management		2
Undermined the authority of the Principal		3
Provided useful expertise		4
Undue interference from outsiders		5
Made Principals more accountable		6
Others(please list below)		7

- 11 Do you consider the powers of the Boards of Education to be:

Excessive		1
Adequate		2
Inadequate		3
Can't say		4

- 12(a) Would you like to see members of the local community become more involved in the decision making about the running of the school?

Yes		1
No		2

- 12(b) Briefly explain the reasons for your answer to question 12(a)

.....

.....

.....

- 13 What effect has the establishment of Education/School Districts had on the services provided to your school?

Improved		1
No change		2
Worsened		3
Don't Know		4

- 14 Would you like to see more authority decentralised to the Education/School Districts?

Yes		1
No		2

- 15 Do you consider the dual state and church control of schools satisfactory?

Yes		1
No		2

- 16 If you answered 'No' to question 15, how do you think schools should be controlled?

By the State only		1
By the Church only		2
Other(please specify)		3

- 17 Briefly give the reasons for your choice of answer to question 16

.....

.....

.....

- 18 Is there an established management structure in your school?

Yes		1
No		2

- 19 Do you consider the current management structure of your school satisfactory?

Yes		1
No		2

- 20 If you answered 'No' to question 19, what changes would you like to see?

.....

.....

.....

- 21 Would you like to see greater powers of decision-making decentralised to schools?

Yes		1
No		2

- 22 If you answered 'Yes' to question 21, what particular functions would you like to see decentralised to schools? (You may select as many answers as you like)

Staff recruitment		1
Staff appraisal		2
Staff discipline		3
Budgetary management		4
Fund raising/income generation		5
Staff training		6
Curriculum development		7
Others(please specify)		8

- 23 Which of the following indicators are used to measure the performance of your school?(You may select as many answers as you wish)

No. of students on roll		1
The drop-out rate		2
Examination pass rates		3
Teacher-student ratio		4
Cost per student		5
Distribution of teacher qualification		6
Attitude and behavioural changes		7
Others (please specify)		8

- 24 Does your school work to an annual plan?

Yes		1
No		2

- 25 Are annual targets, goals or objectives set for your school?

Yes		1
No		2

- 26 If you answered 'Yes' to question 25, do you monitor actual achievement against targets?

Yes		1
No		2

- 27 What do you see as the major barriers to improved effectiveness in managing your schools?  
(Select 5 answers only)

Low morale of teachers		1
Lack of motivation amongst students		2
Inadequate materials and equipment		3
Poor quality of accommodation		4
Inadequate training of school managers		5
Heavy workload of Principals		6
Lack of decision making powers at school level		7
Shortage of qualified teachers		8
Others (please specify below)		9

- 28 To what extent do you think that the quality of management in a school affect its performance?

Significantly		1
Moderately		2
Marginally		3
Negligibly		4

- 29 How are staff meetings organised in your school?

Regularly		1
Occasionally		2
Never		3
Other(Please specify below)		4

30. Who are you directly accountable to for the day to day management of your school?

Board of Management		1
District Education Officer		2
Chief Education Officer		3
Other(please specify below)		4

31. How would you describe your understanding of government priorities in education?

Very good		1
Good		2
Fair		3

32. Are you familiar with the OECS Education Reform Strategy?

Yes		1
No		2

33. What is your highest qualification?

Doctorate		1
Master's degree		2
Bachelor's degree		3
Diploma		4
Teachers Certificate		5
Other (please specify)		6

34. Have you any qualifications in management or administration?

Yes		1
No		2



- 35 If you answered 'Yes' to question 34, please list the titles of the qualifications:

.....

.....

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- 36 Have you attended any other training in management or administration? ( eg. workshops and short courses)

Yes		1
No		2

- 37 If you answered 'Yes' to question 36, please give details of courses attended over the last 3 years:

.....

.....

.....

- 38 Do you feel that you have had the training necessary to to carry out your role.

Yes		1
No		2

- 39 How would you describe the need for principals to be trained in management and administration?

Essential		1
Very important		2
Important		3
Useful		4
Unimportant		5

- 40 In which age group are you?

25-34		1
35-49		2
50+		3

41 What is your gender?

Male		1
Female		2

42 How long have you been in teaching?

Under 10 years		1
11-15 years		2
16-20 years		3
21-25 years		4
Over 25 years		5

43 How long have you been a Principal?

Under 5 years		1
6-11 years		2
12-16 years		3
17-22 years		4
Over 22 years		5

44 By what route did you enter the teaching profession?

Graduate entry		1
CXC/O/A level equivalent entry		2
Pupil-teacher system		3
Other (please specify)		4

I also hope to conduct discussions with principals during March 1994. Would you be willing to participate in these discussions?

Yes	
No	

Thank you once again, for your valuable time and effort in completing the questionnaire.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **List of Personnel Interviewed**

#### **Officials**

Minister of Education, Culture and Broadcasting

Chief Education Officer

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Culture and Broadcasting

Education Officer, Primary Schools

Education Officer, Secondary Schools

Education Officer, Planning

Education Officer, District 6

Education Officer, Examinations, Testing and Evaluation

Director of OECS Education Reform Strategy

Head of Faculty of Teacher Education, Sir Arthur Lewis Community College

Director, Curriculum and Materials Development Unit

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community Development and Youth Affairs

Chair, Catholic Education Board of Management

#### **Principals**

Clendon Mason Memorial Secondary School

Choiseul Secondary School

Castries Comprehensive School

Micoud Secondary School

Sir Ira Simmons Secondary School

Augier Combined School

Monchy Combined School

Babonneau Primary School

Carmen Renee Memorial School

Derniere Riviere Primary School

## Appendix 3

### Implementation Plan for Key Recommendations

This implementation plan outlines an action plan for each set of policy recommendations, and categorises them as immediate, medium or long term. This is a guide and it is recognised that the timing may be affected by emerging developments and the availability of resources.

Recommendations	Specific Actions	Timescale	Outcome and Outcome Indicators
<b>Structural and Organisational Framework</b>			
Review the structure and organisation of the education system.	Appoint an Education Advisory Board	Immediate	The availability of better quality and improved advice on education to inform policy.
	Publish consultation paper on the reorganisation and restructuring of the education system. Key issues to consult on will include: review of the policy of decentralisation focusing on its appropriateness and exploring alternative models for democratisation, rationalising the number of school districts and regional authorities making their boundaries coterminous, setting up School Partnership Boards a strengthened role for the church in religious and moral education, but a reduced role in school management and control	Medium	<p>Democratisation of educational decision-making through the involvement of major stakeholders.</p> <p>A more coherent, efficient and effectiveness organisation of education with clear roles, responsibility, accountability and lines of communication within the system.</p>

<b>Policy Directions</b>			
Policy Analysis	Develop and adopt a policy analysis framework	Immediate	Improvements in policy implementation through better policy analysis, selection of policy choices and monitoring against schedules and targets.
Curriculum Review	Review the content of the curriculum to make it more relevant to the Caribbean milieu and responsive to globalisation.  Introduce and promote vocational and technical education more widely, and on par with academic education.	Medium	A curriculum that better reflects local needs and aspirations, including the wider availability and demand for technical and vocational education and growth in enterprise development.
Educational Research	Research capacity established in partnership with Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, Centre for Research and University of West Indies	Medium	The availability of locally focused research information to help inform general knowledge and understanding of uses and inform and improve policymaking.
School performance measurement and review	Develop standardised tests for primary and the pre-examination stages of secondary education	Immediate	Agreed standards for measuring achievements at different stages in the school system and mechanisms for identifying pupils who under perform or need additional help.
	Set targets, initially in core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science and Information Technology, which is to be extended to the whole curriculum later.	Immediate	Performance of the education system and schools can be judged against pre determined objectives and targets.

	Review the process and procedures for school performance review starting with a review of the 'effectiveness school principles' on which it is based to include measurable performance indicators		
	Establishing a trained team of reviewers set up system to monitor implementation of action plans.	Medium  Immediate	<p>A robust, impartial and transparent system for assessing the performance of schools with appropriate support infrastructure to help schools respond to any follow-up action.</p> <p>A well-trained team of 'reviews' capable of providing professional and constructive advice.</p>

Human Resource Development: <i>(strengthening local capacity building and devise new strategy for meeting skill shortages in the short to medium-term).</i>	Make human resources development a major function within the Ministry and link scholarships to current and future human resource needs.	Immediate	A strategy that strengthens and secures the human resource and skills need in the short to medium-term that allows capacity building for the long term
	Develop a new training programme for principals, based on competences required for the role.	Immediate	A more efficient and effective strategy and training programme for that reflect the requirements of the job and the personal developmental needs of principals.
	Establish a system for conducting training needs analyses among principals to inform staff development activities.	Immediate	
	Reformulate the mode of study for principals studying at Sir Arthur Lewis College to include block releases, part-time, residential courses, distance learning, a move from full-time paid study	Medium	More competent principals capable of achieving policy objectives of raising standards in schools.

School Management	Introduce School Partnership Boards for all schools	Immediate	Greater community and parental awareness of educational issues and involvement through increased support for school initiatives.
	Publish guidance on the support available to schools, including eligibility criteria for Vice Principals, support for capital purchases, equipment and for covering for absent staff.	Medium	Strengthened management and administrative support for schools.
	Establish a strategic planning process for schools that will require the production of school work plans that include objectives and targets against which performance can be measured.	Medium	Availability of strategic and operational plans to guide schools in their development.
Managing Dependence	Undertake research to establish the extent and impact of scale and dependence on education.	Medium	Availability of research information and greater public awareness and understanding of critical areas of educational development.
	Promote awareness and generate discussions about globalisation generally and education dependence in particular.	Medium	Clear statement on government position on the impact of scale and dependence locally, and strategies to address their effects including clear objectives by which progress can be judged.
	Statement of government position on education dependence and strategies to achieve and maintain position.	Long	



New Vision for Education	Appoint a Commission on Education to review education in St. Lucia.		A document providing comprehensive information about every aspect of the education that makes recommendations about the type of education system and policies needed to meet the aspirations of St. Lucians in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century.
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